

A
Warning-piece
FOR THE
Slumbring Virgins:
OR AN
ALARM
TO THE
Friends of the Bridegroom.

In some awakening Meditations upon
Christs own Watch-word, *Mat. 26. 41.*
Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into
temptation, &c.

The Third Edition.

By *Geo. Scortreth*, Preacher of the Go-
spel in *Lincoln*.

Rev. 16. 15. Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that
watcheth, & keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, &c.

London, Printed for *John Wilkins*, next door unto
the *Exchange Coffee-House*, in *Exchange-Alley*,
over against the *Royall-Exchange*, 1672.

1851-1852

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*To the Friends, and
Followers of the Lamb.*

Beloved in our Lord,

I Had not thought
to have Printed
any of my poor
Labours in the Lord ;
though it has been much
upon my heart, they might
be imprinted upon the
hearts of the Hearers by
the Spirit of the living
God : But some late im-
pulses have been upon my
spirit (since infirmities
have grown upon me) to

leave a few words with
the Servants of Christ be-
fore I leave them; looking
up to him, to leave his
blessing with them; and
that upon these and the
like Considerations: 1.

The strange Numbrings
of so many backsliding
Christians at this day,
have somewhat awakened
my drowfie spirit; and
my eye hath affected my
heart, to see so many slee-
py eyes, and heavy hearts;
so that I am not at rest,
till I have eased my own
soul in warning them o-
penly, as in weeping for
them in secret. 2. The
Lord

Lord hath been following
me with awakening di-
spensations ; Morning by
morning awakening my
ear to receive instruction:
and while he haeth shaken
his Rod of fatherly Cor-
rection over me, a deep
Conviction hath fallen
from Heaven upon me,
that it is the work of the
day in its day, for the
Watchmen to cry aloud,
saying, *Awake, Awake.* 3. I
have some sweet perswa-
sions through mercy, that
whiles I am at the Lords
Work, stirring up others
to watch and pray, I shall
find him at work within,

A 3

stir-

stirring me up to take
hold of him; and giving
in some awakening heart-
reflections upon these
Meditations of Watch-
fulness; and my heart tells
me, the Watchmen of all
others would be well a-
wakened, and ever upon
their Watch at such a day
as this. 4. Pity to Slum-
bring Saints, who hear
not the sounding of their
own bowels to make them
pity themselves, hath mo-
ved me to knock at their
doors, and ask them how
they do at heart; They
little think (alas) now
their hearts are asleep, of
the

the sorrows that are coming upon the Men and Women that are at ease in *Zion*, as sorrow upon a Woman in Travel. 5. The love of Christ constrains me to call upon his slothful Servants to arise and fall to their Masters work; who hath most to do i'th last dayes, and would not be left alone at it : many heads, hands, and hearts busie together, would make light work: 'twould go merrily on, and not so heavily as now it does, whiles so many heads and hearts are heavy with sleep. 6. The stirring

Appetites of some hungry craving ones (indeared to me in the bonds of the Gospel) who are daily waiting with longing for one cluster of Grapes or other, from the Celestial Canaan, have made me the more willing to press this one Grape for their sakes: happily they may find a little sweetness in it, (though none else should) as taking and tasting it with a good will, from his hand, whose heart is towards them. And if any of these should unhappily be overtaken with that dead sleep of mid-

midnight-security, which hath surprized so many at this day; who knows but the importunities of one that is their Friend, may prevail with them, to rise and open the door of their hearts, when the *Bridegroom* himself shall knock, who is their best and dearest Friend i'th World.

These being the *Wheels* which hath set this *Watch* on motion, you may not expect any eye or ear-affecting curiosity, but heart-awakening Gospel Simplicity; the enticing words of mans wisdom have lull'd many asleep:
and

and it must be plainness
of speech in the demon-
stration of the *Spirit*, that
must awaken them. I have
most to do in this Work
with *Wisdoms Children*, who
have *learnt* to become *fools*,
that they may be *wise*, and
had rather hear one word
spoken to the *understanding*,
then a thousand words in
an unknown Tongue.

The corporal *weaknesses*
and spiritual *wants* of one
groaning under an heap
of *infirmities*, will make a
sufficient Apology for all
wants and *weaknesses*, as to
matter or method: 'Tis
broken meat, this, for bro-
ken

ken hearts, who will be gathering up a few *Crumbs* here and there; and if it be well digested within, it will be the less matter, though it be so indigested without.

I am very sensible, 'tis sown in great weakness, (alas, how can so poor a nothing Creature do otherwise!) yet I am not out of *heart* or *hopes*, through grace, but it may rise up in power, to the raising up of some that are asleep in sin, and the rousing up of others that are under a sinful slumber, by the *power* of the *Spirit*; which is his
hearts

hearts design and desire,
who would willingly be=
speak your heart-remem=
brances, while he takes the
humble boldness to be
one of your weak (though
willing) *Remembrancers* in
the Name of the Lord,
that he may be accounted
worthy to be found a
watchful Servant of *Christ*
Jesus our Lord, and

Your faithful Servant
for Jesus sake,

G. S.

From my Chamber
in little Queen-
street, London,
M. 7. 1656.

To

*To my well-beloved Friends,
endeared to me in the Love
and Bonds of the Gospel, at
Lincoln, or elsewhere.*

Dear Friends,

BEing laid aside by the
Hand of my Righteous
Father, as to the publick
Work of the Ministry
amongst you; you have been
much upon my heart, in my pri-
vate Meditations, to stir you up
and put you in remembrance to
wait upon our Lord, & for him,
who will meet those with re-
joycing, that remember him in
his wayes. The openings of your
hearts to me, in much affection
and compassion, as many of your
eyes witnessed at our parting,
(not knowing whether we should
see the faces of one another any
more)

Isa. 64. 5.

more) and as your affectionate remembrances of me, while absent, and under present bodily pressuress, do sufficiently testifie, have much bespoke my heart on your behalf to leave this Watchword with you, if I should now take my rest and sleep in Jesus. And if the Father of Mercies should graciously raise me up by his strength, to spend & be spent amongst you, 'twould be a sweet mercy, to find you in a waiting watching posture: 'Twill be the more seasonable to *knock* where they are awakened, and to strike while the Iron's hot; The Word of Life will be most welcome to quickned spirits.

That you may read these following awakening Meditations, with open eyes and hearts, let me present you with a few preparatory hints, to an awakened posture; happily your sight may
be

be a little cleared by this fore-
taste (as *Jonathans* was upon his
tasting a little Honey from the
end of his Rod) if you look up
for eye-salve from Heaven, while
you are looking on them.

And first, by way of Counsel.

1. Harken as with both Ears
to the glad-tydings of the Go-
spel; you'll find, that good re-
ports from Jesus Christ, under
Evangelical Dispensations, will
exceedingly affect, and effectual-
ly awaken your hearts. The
sweetness of the bunch of *grapes*
upon that staff of beauty, feel-
ingly tasted, will set you a long-
ing after the choice Fruits of the
Heavenly *Canaan*; and hungry
souls will not easily sleep over
their spiritual Food. 2. Walk
up to Light received in the love
and power of it; you'll find it
a good thing indeed to behold
the pure heart-quickning beams
of

of the Sun of Righteousness : Its
Soul-taking too ; 'Twill follow
you, as you follow it ; Then shall
Hos. 6. 3. you know, if you follow on to
know the Lord his; goings forth
will be prepared as the morning,
shining upon you, & within you,
and causing your Path to shine
more & more to the perfect day:
And you will find this Sun-shine
marvellously clearing & quick-
ning the eyes of your under-
standing. 3. Knock oft at your
own doors, you may be bold at
home, and ask every day, How
all does within ; what strength of
faith ; what warmth of love ; what
growth in grace, &c. Much
Soul-searching, will very much
prevent Soul-slumbring : Com-
muning with Conscience will
keep it awake, and it will cry
loud in your ears to keep you
awake. 4. Stir up one another,
and that with importunity, to
stir

stir up the Grace of Christ that
is in you, to do good to all, &c.
and all the good you can; and to
do what you find in your hands
to do for God, with all your
might, and that while you have
opportunity; for there is no
work i^th Grave, whither we are *Eccles. 9.*
going. 'Twill be one of the best *10.*
deeds of pure charity at this
day, to visit crazy sick souls,
that lie languishing and slum-
bring under spiritual Consump-
tions, in the Name of the Lord;
and to propound heart-searching
Questions to quicken them, in-
stead of heart-separating Que-
ries, which have deaden'd them.
And sure it would be a very sea-
sonable work in this hour of
temptation, amongst Christian
friends, (at distance) to take up
that Primitive Practice of the
blessed Servants and Martyrs of
Jesus, by quickening up one an-
B others

others spirits with heart-awakening Letters. I cannot but commend this labour of Love to such as are present with one another in spirit and love, when absent in body, as that which some in our dayes have found a sweet blessing in, even as in that cluster mentioned, *I/a. 65. 8.*

5. Give all diligence in the frequent and fervent performance of all Gospel-duties with a Gospel-spirit, setting grace on work in all by the supply of the Spirit; and if you find your hearts ready to follow the Lord fully in all the work he has cut up for you, you'll find work enough ready at your hands and hearts to keep you awake. 6. Cast up your spiritual accounts every day, with an eye to that great Day, when every one must give an account of himself to the Judge of Quick and Dead; oft

Soul-

Soul reckonings will rowse up
your spirits much, to wait for
the Bridegroom with loyns girt,
and lamps burning, as if you *Mat. 25.*
heard the cry at midnight.

Secondly, By way of *Caution.*

1. Take heed of an heavy Ear
under the Sound of the Gospel,
lest your ears should tingle for
it another day. The Seers eyes
must needs weep in secret for
you, if they behold you sleeping
openly under the Lords all-see-
ing eye ; 'Twill sadden the
hearts of weak Christians to see
you heavy-hearted under that
Gospel of Grace, by which they
and you have been often awake-
ned ; and carnal hearts will be
the more apt to slight that spi-
ritual food which they see you
sleep over. 2. Take heed of
resting in a form of Godliness,
without power, of taking up
with the Letter, without the Spi-

rit; or being contented with a Name to live, without that new Name, and a new Heart and Life: You may lie dead at the Letter, till you die, but the Spirit will quicken you, and put life into your spirit; You may easily slumber under the form of an outvvard profession, but the constant exercise of the povver of godliness vwill effectually avva-
ken you. 3. Dally not vvith any beloved lust, nor be dandled upon any *Dalilabs* Lap, lest you fall asleep upon it, and be betrayed; If your hearts go after any strange Lovers, you must needs lose your first love to your first Husband, and be left heartlesse and spiritlesse; if you indulge any right Eye, or right Hand, hovv dark vwill the right Eye be? and hovv dead the right Hand of your inward Man? you must vvatch over your ovvn iniquity,

quity, yea, over every sin, as
ever you would be found watch-
ful at God's Word, or chearful
in his way. Sensuality in any
kind will breed spiritual secu-
rity at first, and bring perplexity
of spirit at last. Sin's calm must
needs end in a sad storm. 4. Take
heed of self-seeking, and seek-
ing great things to your selves.
A selfish spirit will be sluggish in
spirituals; if you once begin to
take your fill of creature-com-
forts, you'll have no stomach to
the things of Christ, but even
sleep at his Breast: The love of
the World will eat out your love
to God, his Word, his Work, his
People, &c. If you be all upon't,
rising early to eat the bread of
sorrows, you'll lose that sweet
sleep he gives his Beloved, and
be cast into a false slumber, feed-
ing your selves with foolish fan-
cies, saying, *Soul, take thine ease;*

Psal. 127
2.

where little ease is to be found :
when the heart is drunk with
the strong Wine of the Worlds
Cup, or drowned in the sweet
Waters of its own Cistern, 'twill
certainly fall into a dead sleep ;
and Christians overloaden with
thick Clay, we see with sorrow
how heavily they drive. 5. Take
heed of slighting any holy Du-
ties, and of a slight frame of spi-
rit in them. 'Tis a slighting of
God himself, who will lightly
esteem such, and leave them to
their own slothful spirits. A
sluggish indisposition will ever
attend sinful omiffions ; and
such as dare be bold in the omit-
ting of good, are in danger to
become base and vile in the
committing of evill : If your
hearts back-slide in secret from
humble communion with God
in his holy wayes, he will turn his
back upon you, and leave you
to

to eat the fruit of your own
wayes ; and then, alas, how weak
will your hearts be, in, and to,
any thing that's good ? how wo-
fully evil ? 6. Take heed of
grieving the good Spirit of God ;
lest he go away sadly, and leave
you to the heaviness of your
own spirits. Oh, if you quench
the Heavenly sparks of his holy
motions, the fire of your love
and zeal will quickly be going
out, & you'll grow cold at heart.
Oh do not, do not tempt the
Holy Ghost, no, not for a world,
lest he withdraw his Light, Life,
Power, and Peace from you ;
and then how dark and dead,
heartless and helpless will you
lie in this hour of Temptation ?

These are the broken thoughts
of one of your poor heart-
friends, when afflicted and ab-
sent in body, yet affected, as
present in spirit, with the sense

of the room he hath had in
your hearts, while the Hand of
the Lord hath touched him;
What in mercy he hath brought
to my hand and heart, (while I
had only his own Book with me)
I leave to the blessing of his
own hand, upon your hearts and
mind.

Now the Lord direct your
hearts into the love of God, and
the patient waiting for of Christ.
And I beseech you Brethren for
his sake, and the love of the
Spirit, that you strive together
and asunder in your prayers to
God for me, that he would con-
sider my troubles, and know
my Soul in adversity, that I may
rejoyce in his mercy; and that
I may come unto you with joy
by the Will of God, and may
with you be refreshed, through
the gracious presence of Christ,
to the praise of his Grace, to
whose

whose benediction, direction,
and dominion, I humbly com-
mit you, and rest,

Your much obliged Friend

and Servant in the

Gospel of Christ,

G. S.



Christian



Christian Reader,

AS 'tis the special Office of some men to be Watchmen, so 'tis the common duty of all men to Watch. That some men are appointed to vvatch over others, cannot excuse any mans neglect of vvatching over Himself. All the Ports of the Body, the Eyes, the Ears, the Lips, (at vvwhich the Soul is continually issuing out by several acts, or taking in from several Objects) need a continual vvatch upon them ; howv much more doth that most important Piece of all, the Heart ? We should, alvvayes vvatch vvhat God is doing, vve should vvatch vvhat God is speaking, vvhat he speaks

to

to us in his Word, vvhat he
speaks to us in his Works; We
should vvatch what he speaks to
move us unto Prayer, and vvhat
he speaks in answer to the mo-
tions vvvhich vve have made in
Prayer. Hovv vvatchful should
they be, vvho have all these, and
many more, occasions of vvatch-
ing? We read in *Daniel*,
(Chap. 4. 13.) *Of a Watcher, and
a Holy one that came down from
Heaven*; And surely none on
Earth can be *Holy Ones*, unless
they be Watchers. The careless
Soul is alvvayes a corrupt one;
and security layeth us open to
all impurity. Satan vvatcheth
to make us Halt, and evil men
vvatch for our Haltings; We
shall never take either even or
clean steps, unless vve vvatch
our ovvn goings, and ponder the
path of our feet: Watchfulness
being so indispensable a Duty,
hovv

howv glad should vve be of any thing either to avvaken us, or keep us avvake? The Learned and Godly Author of this ensuing Discourse, hath *beaten such an Alarm, and shot off such a Warning-Piece in our Quarters,* that if the Virgins slumber still, as their security vwill be inexcusable, so their calamity vwill be unavoidable. What can they look for, vvho vwill not vvatch to pray, But that God (as he once did, *Jer. 31. 28.*) *should watch over them to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to afflict;* What can they look for, vvho vwill not vvatch to do good, but that, God, (as another Prophet saith he once did, *Dan. 4. 13.*) *should watch upon the evil, and bring it upon them?* They vvho vwill not take vvarning, deserve to be made one. Having perused this Manual of Watchfulness,

ness,

ness, I commend it into the hands and to the hearts of all those, vvho vvould find peace, and be found in peace, vvhen their Lord cometh. It vvvas sad, that the Disciples eyes vvvere so heavy, that they could not vvatch vvith Christ one hour, vvhen he vvvas going out of the World. And it vvill be more sad vvith those, vvwhose hearts are so heavy, that they cannot vvatch for the return of Christ at all hours : vvho therefore hath not told us, the particular hour of his coming, that vve at all hours might be kept vvatching for it. And Blessed vvill those Servants be, vvhom vvhen their Lord cometh, he shall find vvatching and praying, or vvatching unto prayer, that they enter not into temptation, and that they may be kept in the hour of temptation.

Reader,

Reader, That this Book may
be blessed from Above to make
thee Watchful, is his Prayer,
vvhho readily approves it for the
Press, and publick Use of this
Slumbring Age,

Joseph Caryl.

To



To the Reader.

READER,

T *Hey who keep close to the
Lord Christ in Holiness of
Life, and purity of Doctrine,
are Virgins, whether particular
Persons, or Churches: Such being
expos'd to many temptations, and
subject to much Slumbring, here
is a Warning-Piece for them. The
great Watchman of Israel warn'd
his Apostles, yea all to Watch: So* *Mark 13*
doth this good Watchman in Israel. *37.*
*Watching is a Duty of grand im-
portance. Noah, Lot, David,
Peter, and other Worthies were
tempted, slumbred, and suffered
much for want of Watchfulness.
When Kings slumber, they may lose* *1 Sam.*
a Skirt of their Garments; and *24. 13.*
*when Virgins slumber, they may
lose*

lose their whole Garments, all their
Rev. 16. Ornaments, and the shame of their
15. nakedness appear. The vigilant
Author hath prepared and fitted
this Treatise to prevent such evils;
Its little, but of much worth, being
Judicious, Succinct, and Spiritual.
Bulkie Volumn, must give place.
Its full of Apples of Gold in Pi-
ctures of Silver, choice Truths in
choice expressions. Reader, wouldst
thou be a wise, watchful, and expe-
rimental Christian, look seriously
into this Treatise, lay the Contents
of it close to thy heart, and be sure
to have thy desire.

William Greenhill,

Geo. Griffiths.



A
 WARNING-PIECE
 FOR THE
 Slumbring-Virgins.

MATTH. 26. 41.

*Watch and Pray, that ye enter
 not into temptation.*

IN the 37th Verse of this Chapter, we find, Jesus took *Peter*, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and *be. Mat. 17.* *gan to be sorrowful*, &c. They that^{1, 2.} had seen his glory in the Mount, when

C

his

his Countenance shined as the Sun, &c. must now see him under a Cloud, his glory veiled; they beheld him in his Tryumph, and must see him in his trouble. 'Tis Christs familiar way to be before-hand with his suffering Servants, to give them some hearty draughts of the Cup of Consolation, before he put into their hands the Cup of *trembling*; And 'tis a sweet heart-taking method, well-becoming our tender-hearted Phyfician, who loves to be preventing his poor ones with tender mercies, so preparing them for sufferings for him, by declaring his loveliness and love to them.

In the 40th Verse: Christ finds his Disciples asleep, when he had newly called upon them to watch, (so apt are we to sleep under awakening teachings) when he was heavy and sorrowful even to the death, how heavy were their eyes? how heartless they at such a time, even as dead men? they cannot watch with him, or for him, when his enemies were watching to take him. Ah poor helpless, Spiritless friends to him, who had so befriended them;
His

His own Disciples have least care to watch, when greatest cause to watch; now was their time if ever to watch, when he so awakened, and now they let their watch fall; What, not watch with me one hour? Is it come to this? No better Souldiers under so good a Captain? What, deal so ill with me, who have dealt so well with you? Yea, not watch with me one hour, who have watched so long over you for good? And now the hour is come too? If not for me, yet for your selves, *for when the Shepherd is smitten, the Sheep will be scattered?* But no warning will keep them awake when the heart's asleep; He comes once, and again, yea the third time, and finds them sleeping, (thus the sleepe evil grows upon us) we are usually most secure, when least safe, and heaviest with sleep, under heaviest awakening providences.

In the Text, we have Christ's faithful Watch-word, or friendly Alarm to his slumbring Disciples; where observe.

A Warning-piece

1. A double Duty commanded.
2. A double Reason commended.

1. A double Duty commanded, *Watch and Pray*; an excellent present remedy against spiritual security; A word in season; an happy conjunction, a blessed pair joyned together by Christ himself, let no man put them asunder: Watching without Prayer will be helpless; and Prayer without Watching will be heartless; but both together, heartful and helpful: Prayer without watching will never awaken us, and watching without prayer will never awaken the Lord to watch over us for good; but both together will bring in many awakening, quickning, and comforting visits betwixt God and our Souls: Watching in prayer makes it a good watch, and prayer in watching makes all things work for good.

2. A double Reason commended, *Lest ye enter into temptation. The Spirit indeed, &c.*

1. Ye are exposed to temptation,

2. Ye

for the Slumbring Virgins.

5

2. Ye are indisposed to opposition.

1. Ye are exposed to temptation, if you do not watch and pray, you tempt the Lord to lead you into temptation, and leave you there; you tempt the tempter to tempt you; if you do not watch and pray, he'l watch to make a prey of you; And you tempt your selves, you lie nearest to and fairest for temptations, when you are farthest from watchful supplication. 1. You close with temptations, you are in the mid'st of them before you be aware; if you watch not to shut the door against them, you open the door to them, there will be temptations upon you within and without, and you will be within them; while you lie sleepy and prayerless upon a bed of ease, you even lay a Cushion for Satan to lie down by you; you enter into temptation, and temptations will enter into you. 2. Temptations will enclose you, you'l not know how to get out, when once in; you are in danger to be lost i'th croud; you may be easily ensnared, but not so easily enlarged;

A Warning-piece

'tis hard getting out of the Devils Labyrinth.

2. Ye are indisposed to opposition ; the flesh is weak, and your temptations strong ; here observe,

1. Christs candid Concession ;
the Spirit, &c.

2. His clear Conviction ; *the Flesh, &c.*

1. His Concession ; *the Spirit is willing* ; your heart is good, though your hand be short ; there is sincerity in you, though you want ability : Christ cannot find in his heart to break the bruised Reed, the broken heart ; he owns their willingness with a good will, though much weakness in them. It may do one good at heart to see, how his heart was upon their hearts, when their heads were heavy ; how sweetly his Spirit sympathizeth with their Spirits ; 'tis like himself ; *the Spirit is willing*, saith he.

2. His Conviction ; *the Flesh is weak* ; Christ is willing to overlook their infirmities, but will have them look upon them ; they must not indulge themselves, for his indulgency

towards them ; Here's Counsel implied, to take care of their Spirits, that they may be quickned, cherished, and strengthened by his Spirit, who helps to will and to do of his good pleasure; that to wil may be present with them, and to perform too.

And here's Caution intimated, to take heed to the flesh, to keep them humble, and sensible of their weakness, that he might perfect his strength in weakness.

I shall sum up all under this one word, and 'tis Christ's own ; *Watch.* Oh that he would own it, and follow it home to our hearts by his Spirit, that we may own it for his sake.

Obs. *'Tis an Evangelical Duty to Watch.*

This is Wisdoms own Counsel, and must be her Childrens care ; The Captain of our Salvation, gives this word to his Souldiers, to awaken them to work out their Salvation, &c. Now Souldiers upon pain of death, must be at a word of command : The watchful Shepherd of Souls calls upon his

Sheep to watch, and his Voice they most hear; How oft is this Hammer lift up, to knock at the everlasting doors of our hearts, even by the King of Glory himself? Ten times at the least, we have this word expressed by the Evangelists, from Christs own mouth: How apt are we to sleep on our beds, that he must cry so hard, and call so oft upon us, saying, Watch, watch, watch, &c. How hardly are we awakened? What a dead sleep is upon us, that there must be such crying, jogging, knocking, &c? How dangerous is carnal security, that Christ should so importunately warn us, and affectionately watch over us, as to this spiritual duty of watching; there must needs be much in it, when he is so much upon it; and sure watching well, will tend greatly to our best welfare and happiness, seeing our good Lord and Master makes it so much our business.

But what is this Gospel Duty of Watching?

First, in general; 'tis a busie work, and much goes to the doing of it in a Gospel

Gospel way : This one work well understood will find us all work enough; The word is borrowed from the practise of Shepherds watching over their Flocks, as *Jacob* over *Labans*; or from Souldiers upon the Guard, who keep strict watch; both these must discharge their trust with great diligence and patience; special care and constancy; they must endure the heat by day, and the cold by night; Christ's experienced Souldiers do find, 'tis hard duty, this; much must be done and suffered upon this account, there's no giving over this watch, what ever it costs us, our life lies on't.

This spiritual watch presupposes an awakened heart out of *Natural Stupidity*, and *Formal Security*.

I. Out of natural, carnal stupidity; they cannot possibly watch, who were never awakened; the natural man is spiritually dead, and as incapable of this spiritual duty, as a man born blind is to see the Sun, or a dead man to hear the Thunder; he must first hear the Voice of the Son or God, saying, Awake thou that sleepest, &c.
before

before he can watch with him or for him : alas, how can they watch, who have eyes and see not ? (like the Idols in the Psalm). He must be a spiritual man, that discerns spiritual things, that is fit to be a spiritual Watch-man, and to wait in the spirit.

2. Out of formal security; A sleepy professor is ever crying, a little sleep, a little slumber, &c. he cannot keep his heart awake if he might have all the World, nor his eyes open ; sluggish slumbring Christians are in no posture for watching, they are as silly Doves without an heart ; they have no heart to this heart-duty, and no heart in it ; they are not spirited for this work ; their spiritual senses are bound up, they have let their watch fall, and will never take it up again without a sound awakening. The watchmen must cry aloud in the ears and consciences of such, or they'll lie down to sleep again and again ; swooning Christians can never watch till the Lord rub them up to purpose ; they had need be living and lively men, that are to watch as for life ; it must be a raised sinner, and rowled

for the Slumbring-Virgins.

II

rowled Saint, that's set about this work.

Secondly, More particularly, Evangelical watching implies these things following.

1. Attention ; a spiritual watchman must have his ear awakened morning by morning, (as the Prophet's) that he may hear what the Spirit saith ; this the Spirit calls for over and over, *Let him that hath an ear, hear, &c.* *Isa. 50. 4.* he must have an hearing and harkening ear too, that would hear the still Voice, the whisperings of the holy Spirit ; he must have an ear to hear from God that keeps his watch, or he will have no eye to see him, no mouth to speak from him or for him ; God has much to say to his awakened ones, that are upon his watch, they had need have their ears about them, yea within them ; An heavy ear, and a sleepy heart go together ; to whom shall we speak and give warning (sayes *Jeremy* sadly) they have uncircumcised ears, &c. and cannot hear ; Alas, the speakers must shut up their mouths there, where the people stop their ears *Mat. 13. 55.*

ears ; they are no hearers indeed, who have ears and hear not. And may we not take up that heavy complaint at this day (one of the saddest in all the Book of God) They have made their hearts and ears heavy, lest they should hear with their ears, &c. Who so deaf as many of Gods Servants, (to borrow that expression) much preaching (as great sounds) hath made many deaf, that what they would not hear, they cannot ; And what are the wisest charmings to such deaf Adders? Well, Christs watchmen must be swift to hear, for his motions are quick ; he's sometimes, but a word and away ; a knock, and he has done.

2. *Intention.* A watchman must be very intent upon his duty ; corporal watching, much more spiritual, should take up our Spirits ; God must be much heeded, and his whole work well minded, even with the whole heart, especially this work of watching ; He's no Servant for Christ, that would serve him by halves ; there's no being for him almost, but altogether, or not at all :

all: All our spiritual forces must be mustred up, to keep this watch; we must stir up all our strength, and all too little in the discharge of this duty; it will take up the whole man; there is no halting here, lest evil overtake us: A lame Christian will never stand to it, but must be sitting down ever and anon. He had need be a man of another Spirit (*Caleb-like*) that would follow the Lord fully in this Spiritual watch. As natural things act to the uttermost, within their Sphear; so in this supernatural work of Evangelical watching, we should act all we can for God, within the Sphear of our Spiritual activity; what ever we find in our hands to do for him (especially at so weighty and busie a work as this) we should do it with all our might: There must be an holy violence and fervency, accompanying Gospel vigilancy; Spiritual force will do well here, indeed we can never watch well without it; If it once come to a spirit of indifferency, it will not be long, ere we be surprized by a spirit of security: If we care not much (*Gallio-like*)

Eccles. 9.
10.

like) we shall watch but little ; a slothful spirit will be sleepy, do what you can. Oh what sad slumbrings amongst us, since Christians have laid themselves down upon beds of ease ! a lazie creature is never likely to watch with Christ, or for him. He's nimble as a Roe, quick in his turns ; No, you must stir up your selves in Christs strength, to quit your selves like men in his service.

3. *Inspection.* Christs Watchmen must be all Seers, and have seeing eyes, as well as hearing ears : Our Spiritual watch lies most within, 'tis an inward watch especially : Our eyes must be in our hearts, and upon them ; 'Tis a very considerable watch word that,
Prov. 42. 3 Above all keeping keep thy heart ; a strong and strict guard must be kept there ; and indeed if the watch be not kept strictly there, all our watching will be in vain ; Twill be to little purpose to set a watch before our mouths, or make a covenant with our eyes ; if the plague of the heart be not watched over, it will be ever breaking forth in-
Jer. 17. 9. to putrified sores. Had we an hundred

dred eyes, they had need be all at watch here, for our hearts are deceitful above measure ; who can know them ? And he that is not faithful in inward watching, will never be good for ought, either as to outward waiting on God, or watching over others. How many have been looking so much abroad, that they are to seek at home ? watching the haltings of others, but not their own ; busie-bodies in others matters, and neglecting the business of their own spirits ; they are espying motes in the eyes of others, and lay up their eyes at home, or see not the beams in them. How oft does the Spirit knock at their doors, and they not within ? When he comes to deal with their hearts, they are not to be found ; 'Twas said of old, *Fools will be meddling*; that is, with others, not themselves : Oh, how many such fools are every where, whose eyes are in the corners of the Earth, seldom in the corners of their own hearts ; most busie where they have least to do, and least where most : Will not the Lord ere long search such as with Candles, who put
out

out their lights within, that they may not see them selves ? Will he not storm them home, that scatter their wayes abroad ? Will not the Judge (think you) be at their doors, who are all for judging others, but not themselves ? Well, the Lord is about to find the heavy-headed and hearted Virgins work within their own doors, and to set them upon heart-watching again by some awakening dispensations ; Oh, 'tis one chief business in our spiritual watch, to try our own spirits ; and much communing with our selves will keep our hearts awake ; and indeed since the Servants of Christ have idled it within, and neglected this inward work of heart-searching they have left their first works and watchings.

4. Circumspection ; In this spiritual watch, as we should have our eyes in our hearts, so in our heads ; as to look within, so without ; As the Dove casts her head about this way and that, before she take her flight ; So should Christ's Doves look above them and about them, yea every way, before they move any way ; As the heart
maist

must be vvatched over, above all
 vvatchings; so there must be a vvatch
 over the mouth, (as over *Dauids*); o-
 ver the eye, (as over *Jobs*); yea, over
 the whole man, and the whole life.
 As we should be ever upon our Watch-
 Tower, to vvatch at all times (being a
 vvork alwayes in season) so to vvatch
 over all things; and to take a view al-
 wayes, above and below, at the right-
 hand and the left; that we be not sur-
 prized any where, in any thing, at any
 time; As the Virtuous Woman whose
 price is above Rubies, is said to look *Prov. 31.*
well into the wayes of her household; So *10, 27.*
 must the Gracious Watch-man do, he
 must be a Seer, an Over-seer to his
 own house: And as the children of
Issacar are said to have understanding *1 Chron.*
 of the times, and to know vvhat *Israel* *12, 32.*
 had to do; So should the generation
 of Spiritual Watchers, have an eye up-
 on Generation-vvork, an heart to it,
 an hand in it, serving their own Gene- *Acts 13.*
 ration (as *David* did) till they fall a- *36.*
 sleep: The Spirituall Watch-man
 should have a discerning into all
 things; not be Eagle-ey'd onely in
 D some

Rev. 4. 6.

some things, and blind as Bats in other things; but as the four Beasts, which were full of eyes within, and full of eyes before and behind too; So should they that are upon the Lord's Watch, be full of eyes, vvithin and vvithout. Alas poor filly creatures that we be, vve meet with a snare in every creature; temptations will be crouding upon us in every condition, vve are in danger on all hands, to be defiled, or deceived; and therefore we had need vvatch at every turn, and have our eyes turning every way (as the flaming sword at the East of the Garden of *E-den*). As the Lord (who is all eye as *Psal. 139.* it were) vvatches us all over; over all our thoughts, all our vvords, all our vvayes, &c; So should vve vvatch over our selves; even all over at all times; our goings out and comings in, our down-sitting and uprising; we should beset our selves with a strict Watch behind and before.

5. *Exercitation.* There is much vvork in this Watch, it is a very busie employment, full of duty, a duty in every duty; vve should watch at every vvork :

work; a slothful Servant is not fit for this stirring service, this is no vwork for lazy-bodies; It's not carried on by sitting still, or looking about us; 'Tis lively work, and requires a living, active, quickned Spirit; Grace in the habit is not sufficient (though in the highest and greatest measure) to keep on foot this spiritual Watch, no not in the least and lowest vwork of it; when Grace is not at vwork, there's no watch kept, it lies sleeping in the soul, and the soul's asleep too; when bodily exercise is laid aside, and there's a cessation from motion and action, vve find great propensity to slumbring and heaviness. 'Tis even so in spirituals, vwhen the acts and exercises of Grace are suspended, we are easily overtaken vwith the spirit of slumber. Since Professors have been idle, and lived at ease in *Zion*, what a strange spirit of formal security, and sluggish secure formality has stolen upon them, and stolen away their hearts too? 'Tis sad, very sad to see how the Virgins are fallen asleep since they have been all for easie work; careless ones have let their Watch fall;

they find themselves little to do in spirituals, and sleep much in spirit; and as they give over vvorking, so they give over vvatching; as they cease from duty, they are seized upon by security. Graces must be exercised, and Habits actuated, by the help of the Spirit of Grace, that our spiritual Watch may be mannaged and maintained. Busie heads and hearts are most vvatchful; if we stir up the Grace of Christ in us, it vvill stir us up to vvatch vvith Christ, and for him. As appears plainly in new Converts, vvho are much vvrought upon, and work much; they are full of spiritual Struglings, Wrestling, Searchings, Pantings, Groanings, Sighings, &c. Oh how vvatchful are these new creatures vvhen new awakened? Christ's Babes are not like other Babes, in this; for they sleep least vvhen new born, and others most; How vvatchful in Prayer, and vvatching unto Prayer? Their eyes even failing vvith looking up; vvatchful in meditation, their hearts are ever bubbling up like a quick spring; vvatchful in hearing the good Word of God, to hear a good

Psal. 45.

good Word from God ; how do they hang about Christs Lips (as it vvere) vvith both ears, for some drops of sweet smelling Myrrh ; how vvatchful to enjoy communion vvith the Father, amongst his Children; how much upon the Wing after the Doves of Christ ? no company now, like the Companions of Christ, that hear his Voice. Now it is far otherwise vvith many ancient Christians, vvho having unbent their Bow of holy Purposes and Practises, (vvhich at first seemed to abide in strength like *Josephs*) grow re- *Gen. 49. 1* miss in Gospel-duties, take their hands off from Christ's Plow, and look back, grow loose in Spirit, lose time, let their Talents lie rusting by them, and their Graces resting in them ; How suddenly and shamefully their Watch falls, as their Work fails ? The longer they live, the less life in their spirits and service, and all things are ready to die in them before they die : How heavily they drive, when they once give over oyling their Wheelles with spiritual exercises.

'Tis an high, hard, great Work to watch after a spiritual manner; they that are upon this Work in good earnest, find a great deal of good Work to do; there's much cut out to their hands; The Lord of the Vineyard will not suffer them to be idle upon his Watch, he'l find them awakening Work: There's head-Work, hand-Work, heart-Work, tongue-Work, life-Work; there's Work within and without, at home and abroad, their own and others, for this life and a better; there's Work enough to keep one awake, and the more we Work in these spiritual Exercises of Faith, Love, Desires, &c. the more watchful we shall be, and the better Watchmen, and Workmen.

And therefore the Lord will find new Work for old idle Professors (if he delight in them) he'l bring slumbering Virgins to Soul-travel again, and awaken them to purpose; they'l feel such hard labour therein, as will be hard to sleep upon; And when loytering Servants fall once to labour again heartily in God's Harvest, how they'l

they'l sweat at it, and do most and best at last; when they see, how much Work they have to do in a little time, how they'l Work and Watch, and Watch in Work?

6. *Expectation.* Souldiers upon the Watch, wait in expectation either of an Enemy to approach, or a Friend to appear, that they may be in a posture of opposition or reception, to resist their Enemies, and to relieve their Friends; So in this spiritual Watch, we must be daily in expectation of our Enemies, vvho will be upon us on a sudden; and if they take us at unawares, we are in an ill taking, (as we use to say) 'twill be our great prejudice, and their advantage; An Enemy not looked for, will be before-hand with us, and hurt us most when we can least help our selves; 'Tis a time he would chuse of all other, when he is least expected; as knowing he shall be least resisted. Our Adversary watches our slumbring times most, that he may take us napping, and take what he pleases from us; and therefore we must ever Watch in expectation of him, that he

A Warning-piece

may never come unlooked for: Nothing will more dishearten and disappoint him. Our expectation frustrates his; Our unwearied Watchings will weary him out; whereas it is a fair invitation to the envious one, to lay aside our expectation of him, who likes best to come unlooked for, and is most to be suspected, when he is least expected.

We must be in expectation also of our best spiritual Friend, who comes oft skipping like a Roe, and loves sometimes to take us on the suddain, to see how we are provided: He hath given us a fair Warning, saying, *Behold I come like a thief* (that is, secretly, suddenly) *in the night*; That we may ever have him upon our hearts, and he may not come in an hour, when we think not of him. Such a blessed Guest would not come unlooked for, whose visits are so Gracious, his love so precious; We are like to lose much of the sweet and comfort of holy and happy communion with him, if we wait little on him and for him; He'l not tarry long, where he is not long looked

looked for and longingly; there he comes and goes suddenly, he thinks himself nothing vvell or yvelcome there, where his company is not looked for; he takes it for a great neglect of him, when we do not expect him, and he will not be long or much there, vvhere he is little looked for.

What are the special times for a Christians Spiritual Watch?

As all Christians should Watch, so at all times; There is a time for all things under the Sun, but no time to lose in spiritual slumber; There's not a spare minute for sinful security; A Christian must never give over Working, Watching, Warring; his labours in the Lord must end with his life, when he dies in the Lord; and his Watch must not fall, till he fall asleep in *Jesus*. This in general, but more especially,

I. In times of spiritual desertion, when the Lord has withdrawn his Spirit and Grace, and seems to be asleep and silent to us; Oh then 'tis high
time

Jer. 14. 8.

time to call upon our selves, saying, *Awake, awake*; and to cry mightily to the Lord, to awake, and keep not silence. When our Beloved is going, then 'tis time (as we love him and our Souls) to stir up our strength, to take hold of him, and not let him go for a World. Does he begin to estrange himself from us? Oh cry heartily to him in their language, *Oh thou Hope of Israel, why shouldst thou be a stranger, as a waifaring man that tarries but for a night, &c?* Thou art in the midst of us, Oh leave us not: Wo unto us, when he shall depart from us! How many evils will come when he goes away? We have all good in the chiefest Good, and all evil without him; 'Tis loss unspeakable to want him, whose absence nothing in Heaven or Earth can make up: If he say, Depart from me, there will be a corner of Hell in it here, as it will be the very Hell in Hell hereafter, *Depart ye cursed, &c.*

Wo and alas unto us, for we have sadly sinned away his gracious presence as ever any people did, by care-
less

less slumbring, and carnal security ;
How oft hath he found us slugging it
upon Beds of ease, when his finger has
been put in at the hole of the door? We
have made him wait, till his head hath
been filled with dew, and his locks *Cant. 5, 2.*
with the drops of the night ; and yet
we have not opened the door to him,
neither for his importunity, nor be-
cause he is our friend. Had it been an
enemy or a stranger had done thus,
he could have born it ; but that his
own familiar friends should lift up the
heel against him ; that ever they should
prove so hard-hearted against so ten-
der-hearted a Saviour ; this goes to
the heart indeed. And now our Be-
loved stands behind the Wall, as one
highly offended, that will scarce look
at those that have shut their eyes a-
gainst his Light, and their hearts a-
gainst his Love: This glorious Sun
covers himself as with a Cloud, be-
cause we sleep out the shinings of his
Light, and slumber out sweet breath-
ing-times shamefully, even in the sight
of the Sun ; and leaves us under thick
spiritual darkness (even such as may
be

be felt) and we are covered as with a Cloud in his anger; And shall we not now awake, and cry after him vwith open mouth, heart, eyes, saying as the Daughters of Jerusalem, *Whither is Cant. 6. 1, our Beloved gone, whither is he turn-*
Cant. 8. 14 ed aside? Oh, return, return; make
haste our Beloved, and be thou like a
young Hart upon the Mountains of Spi-
ces: Oh why should we be as they
that are veiled, and turn aside, &c?
 Ah, the longer he is absent from us, the worse it will be with us every day; and the greater distance from him, the greater our unhappiness: Oh then, as the two Disciples, when the Lord Jesus made as if he would go further, constrained him, saying, *Abide with us, for 'tis towards evening, &c.* So now vwhen he carries strange to us, makes as if he vwould away, and carry all away vwith him too; We should even lay hands on him, and hold him by an humble holy force, saying, *Abide with us, for 'tis towards evening, &c.* The day declines.

2. In times of spiritual declension;
 When noble Vines prove degenerate
 Plants;

Plants ; When Stars fall from Heaven ;
When many begin in the Spirit, and
end in the flesh. Oh then we had
need be upon our spiritual Watch, and
take special heed to our spirits ; When
so many lose first life and love, and
leave their first Works ; We had
need have our eyes about us, yea with-
in us, and look into our own hearts,
lest we be at a loss there too, and cool
within ; When so many fall away.
*Let him that thinketh he stands, take
heed lest he fall ;* 'Tis a time of (al-
most) an universal consumption in Spi-
rituals ; never so great decayes in in-
wards ; Christians Spirits fail and fall
sadly ; Stomachs gone, every where,
to the best food ; little spiritual Palate
is left in any to relish the sweet savour
of Christs precious Oyntments ; all
spiritual senses dull and heavy ; And
shall we not now awake ? Feel our own
Pulses ; Consult vvith spiritual Phy-
sitians, and make diligent use of all
quickning and strengthening means of
Grace, lest we also be left under the
same spiritual languishings, and have
woful occasion to cry out another day,
Our

Our leanness, our leanness?

3. When an hour of spiritual Temptation is upon us; when many are led Captive by spiritual Wickednesses; Oh then that Counsel is most seasonable, *Be vigilant, because your Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* 'Tis not for us to slumber when Satan Watches; nor to shut our eyes, when he's running up and down with open mouth; How easily may he make a prey of us, when we lie sleeping at his feet? The Devil is come down with great rage, he will be worst at last, and do much mischief in a little time; and if the envious one finds us asleep, when he is most awakened, watching over us for evil; What a World of evil will he bring upon us? What havock will he make amongst us, yea within us? What Tares will he sow? If Satan be let loose, he will be working with all-power and policy; and if he find us at a loose end, sleeping idly in the Devils Shop; he'll be very busie with us, and set us a work to our own woe; We may expect a
flood

flood of strong delusions, and strange temptations will be issuing out of his wide mouth, which gapes for us ; if we lie sleeping in his way, we shall be carried away in these filthy streams, like dead fish. The Prince of darkness is broke out, and smoke is broke out of the bottomless Pit with him ; there's great danger of being lost in it, or choaked by it, especially if we walk as blind men in a spiritual sleep.

Oh what need then to awake (if ever) and to call upon the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judab* to awake, and rescue his darlings from the mouth of this roaring Lyon ; to arise for his prey, to divide the spoyl with the mighty, and to lead captivity captive ; If we lie down to sleep now with folded arms, leaving the guide of our spirits, and he leave us alone to the misguidings of our own deceitful hearts ; how will the subtil Serpent deceive us at every turn, and turn us out of the way, to the right hand, or to the left ; especially now the old experienced deceiver, *transforms himself into an Angel of Light*, that he may drive on his Soul-coufening

coolening trade, the more mysteriously and mischievously, putting darkness for light, and light for darkness. Why then, 'tis more then time to awake out of sleep, to get our spirits quickned up by the influence of God's good Spirit, and to muster up all our spiritual forces, speedily and strenuously, putting *on the whole Armour of God* on the right hand, and on the left; that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil on all hands, in this evil day, *and having done all to stand.*

4. In times of great expectation: When we look for great things from Heaven, when *Zion* is in travel for glorious Births, when precious promises are nigh accomplishment, *the Mountains ready to drop new Wine, and the Hills to flow with Milk;* As, the Spirits pouring out like floods, &c. A Spirit of Life ith Witnesses, and a Voice out of the Clouds, saying, *Come up hither; A Nation to be born at once!* Is it not time to cry, Awake, awake, the Glory of the Lord is rising, &c. Oh should we not look with both eyes,

Joel 3.18

eyes, and listen with both ears, to hear
 vwhen it shall be said ; *Who hath heard* Isa. 66. 8.
such a thing, who hath seen such things?
shall the Earth be made to bring forth
in one day? Were it not great pittie
 to sleep out the awakening providences
 that are upon us, making way to fulfil
 such glorious promises? Is not this
 the language of awakened Saints, cry-
 ing, *Awake, awake! put on strength,*
thou Arm of the Lord, as in the dayes
of Old, &c. and shall we now cry,
A little sleep, a little slumber, &c.
 God forbid. O now, now the Lord's
 Remembrancers must *give him no rest,*
 nor rest day nor night under a spirit
 of slumber, *till Jerusalem be made a*
praise in the Earth, and the Rest of
 his Feet be glorious.

'Tis the common cry amongst God's
 People (when they are in straits, and
 at a stand) *Awake, O Lord, why sleepest*
thou? Whenas, alas, 'tis they that are
 asleep, & must be awakened (or they'll
 be *nonplus'd* ever and anon) and as-
 soon as they are awakened, they'll see
 it and say so; We wonder the Work
 goes on no faster, and that the Lord
 E does

does no more for us ; whereas 'tis a wonder he has wrought so much for us, or does any thing at all for our good , who are grown so heedless, heartless and careless under Mercies.

However his work goes on in his own way, whether we sleep or wake ; for his heart is upon't, and he *neither slumbers nor sleeps*, but is running his course as a Giant refreshed with Wine, and will leave his slumbring Servants behind, to follow him with shame and sorrow ; *The Ancient of days* will keep his time, not lose a day, nor miss a minute (however we lose time) And he will give a good account one day what he has been doing for his poor Children, when they will not be able to answer one of a thousand for their slumbrings and wandrings.

5. When the Lord looks for great things from us , having done great things for us, commanded mighty salvations, communicated choice mercies, commended peculiar Gospel- blessings to us, and all by a strong hand through wonders of Providence. Now when and where the Lord does much, so much ;

much; then and there he looks for much; very much. He may well call us to an account at such a time, and say, *What do you more than others?* Mat. 24. Special mercy may challenge singular

duty; He has been at extraordinary charge and cost with us, and he expects more than ordinary in our spirits and services; 'Tis not for us to serve him with that which costs us nought, when we have cost him so dear. One would think, the weight of such Obligations lying upon us, should effectually awaken us, to look up to Heaven, for such a suitable and seasonable communication of his Spirit and Grace, as may more clearly inform us in that high and heavenly Lesson, (most proper for the day) and more fully enable us to take it out, namely, *to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work; &c.*

A low spirit and lazy services are most unanswerable to high and mighty dispensations, and will be most uncomfortable. Shall we do least for him, when he hath done most for us? Hath he watched over us, and his eyes been al-

Deut. 11.

12.

wayes upon us, from the beginning of the year unto the end? And shall we slumber now like slothful servants, as if we had neither eyes to see him working for us, nor hands to work for him? shall living Mercies lie dead by us, and we dying in the midst of them, offering up the dead in sacrifice to the living God, who hath given us our liyes for a prey? shall we thus requite the Lord like a foolish people and unwise? will it not be ill taken at our hands, that we should be worst to him, when he is best to us? No wonder, if he withhold his Spirit, when we thus grieve, tempt, and quench it by a spirit of security; how can we look for other, but that he should be taking away his Golden Candlestick, and the Light too, when so many do little else but play or sleep by it? We must not think to lie alwayes sleeping with the most rich mouth: he will be covering the blessed Paps, girt about with a Golden Girdle, and will be dolefull when we do least for him, when he hath done most for us? Hath he not need yet againe, and his eyes been al-

Applica-

wayes

APPLICATION,*By way of Information.*

Is it a Gospel-duty to watch? Then see the necessity of an awakening Ministry; in such a sleepy Age as this, there was never more need of awakened and awakening Overseers to watch over us, to lift up their voice like a Trumpet, to cry aloud and spare not, saying, Awake! O what need of goads and nails to be fastened in our sides, and upon our hearts, by the Masters of the Assemblies from that one Shepherd! 'Tis time for Wisdom to cry in the Streets, to utter her voice in the chief places of concourse, saying unto you, O Men, I call, &c. When the Virgins slumber thus, both the wise and foolish, 'twill be a great mercy to have the Word of the Lord, as a hammer at our doors, yea as fire within us; and to feel the Sword of the Spirit pricking us to the very heart, to keep us awake in spirit, when so many are heavy with sleep there: There was

Eccles. 12.
11.

Prov. 1. 20
& 8. 4.

never more work, than now, for the Sons of Thunder. Ah, that the spirit of slumber that is fallen upon this Generation, will make work enough for all the faithful watchmen, throughout the Nation; And me-thinks the strong slumbrings of so many sleepy Professors, should exceedingly startle and awaken those that watch for souls; 'Tis not for them to slumber of all others, especially at such a time, when so many lie sleeping round about them:

Isa. 56. 12.

O wo, wo to *the blind Watchmen, the dumb Dogs that cannot bark sleeping, lying down, loving no slumber; who make beds of ease for bedrid spirits, and sow Pillows to sluggards arm-holes; who prophesie smooth things, to a people that love to have it so, that are all for easie work, or none at all.* Oh then let all the watchmen of the house of *Israel*, whom the Lord hath set upon the Watch-Tower, *Watch and pray, and preach in season and out of season, and give the people warning of this hour of temptation, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, that they may deliver their own souls, and*
happily

happily recover others also from the snare of the Devil, who are (asleep in his arms, and) taken captive by him at his will; And let all the Lord's People highly prize, and heartily affect an heart-awakening, searching, quickning Ministry, and welcome that word most, which comes most stirringly home, and is most soundly set on by the power of the Spirit.

2. Is it a Gospel-duty to watch? Then what a special mercy is it at this day to have an awakened heart. The Keeper of *Israel* watches very graciously over those he keeps watchfull; 'Tis no common favour to be kept alive at such a dead time; Sure the Father of mercies looks most sweetly to those Children, and will smile most lovingly upon them, whom he causeth to lye broad-waken, looking after him; O blessed be his Name, that he reserves a little remnant by him, waiting on him and for him! What would become of us all, if a few were not upon their Watch? would not the Lord awake to judgment, were all asleep about him, and none awaked to cry for mercy?

would not he lay about to purpose, did not some hold his hands, by lifting up their hands and hearts to Heaven? Is he not ready to say, Let me alone, that I may consume them? and is he not let alone by all, but an handful of Wrestling Saints that have got within him? Would he not be gone, think you, but that his Dear Ones watch him, cry mightily after him, and will not let him go? Nay, is he not going about to take his Glory, Spirit, Grace, Gospel, and all away with him? 'Tis well for us there are some watching, waiting, weeping about the Bed of *Solomon* (loth to let him go) *valiant men, even the Valiant of Israel*; O happy Souls, that lie ever upon this Heavenly Watch! vvhich vvathe the more, the rather, because so many slumber: It will go well with them, how ill soever things go; For,

I. They are nearest Mercy of all other; if any sweet influences fall from Heaven, they are waiting with

Job 29:23 mouths wide open, as for the latter rain (as of old they waited for *Job*). If the Sun of Righteousness arise, they are like

like to see him first; if his light shine, their eyes are open; and if his love breath, their hearts are open; if good reports come to make the bones fat, who but they will hear, who are ever hearkning? When ever the Lord shall open the door of hope they are next hand; when the day breaks, and the shadows flee away, they'll be the blessed spectators, who watch more than they that watch for the morning. If the Spirit be poured forth as floods, who'll drink so deep as these gaping thirsty Souls? When ever the King sits at Table and causes the Spikenard to send forth a sweet smell, they must needs feel the favour of his oyntments, who wait as Olive-Plants round about his Table, when ever blessings are handed out, they are within reach. Oh 'tis a rich mercy to be nearest mercy.

2. They are fittest for Duty. Is there any work to do for God, his Cause, his People, they are near hand, waiting for it, saying, What wilt thou have us to do, Lord? If a word of Command come, 'tis welcome, they are upon their Watch: If the Lord say,

Isa. 41. 2.

say, Come, they come ; and if he say Go, they go ; their loynes are girt. If the King of glory look out, and cry, Who is on my side ? who ? they are ready to look out of the window towards him, saying, Here are we, Lord. They are called to his foot (as the man of the East) onely waiting for a word from his mouth : they set themselves in a posture on purpose, to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Yea, awakened hearts, whose eyes have seen the King in his beauty, have an holy ambition to do as much, and as wel in their Masters service, as he shall give them power to do, of his good pleasure : Whereas the slothful servant is ever to seek both in will and power, when his Master has work for him ; he will either slip out of the way or sleep at work. If Jesus Christ call oth' sudden, and have any haste of work, he's all ungirt, and will be so long a getting ready, till the business might be half done : But the vigilant diligent servant is at an hours warning ; he is the vessel unto honour, meet for the Masters use, and prepared for every good work.

3. They

3. They are like to be richest in experience ; they must needs be men of great observation, whose eyes are ever open to behold the gracious and glorious goings of God in Providences and Ordinances ; He will make most of his glory and *goodness to pass before those* *Exod. 33.* that watch and wait according to his *19. 22.* appointment, (as *Moses* upon the Rock.) They'l meet with many choise pledges of divine love, many drops of myrrhe from Christs fingers, and Kisses from his lips, that watch at his feet ; his steps will drop fatness upon such as lye in his way, waiting for him ; Hee'l lay up much of his Heavenly treasure in holy awakned hearts, and reveal most of his secrets to his hearkning, hidden ones ; The watchful, faithful Stewards will have out of their *treasure to bring forth, new and old ; Mat. 13.* they'l have all maner of pleasant fruits *52.* laid up at their gates for the Beloved ; *Cant. 7. 13.* they'l be able to give the best account, what God does for their Souls, who watch their own hearts best & wait most for him there ; He will be much with them, whom he finds much at home,
and

and make out much of himself to them; Watchful *Israelites* will be the best provided of hidden *Manna*, they will be before-hand with all others, in respect of the most experience, and best intelligence from Heaven.

4. They are readiest for the appearance of Christ. If he come, at morning, or evening, mid-day, or mid-night, at what watch soever he comes, they are watching; yea when they sleep, their heart waketh; they are ready to go forth to meet the Bridegroom, should he call at mid-night; and his salvation will be most welcome, where it has been most waited for; What an happy and heavenly posture was good old *Simron* in, to meet Christ in the Temple, who had so long waited in the Spirit of consolation of *Israel*? how ready was he to receive that blessed Child with open arms and heart too? where was Christ more welcom, than to little *Zachary*, who was got upon his Watch-Tower (the Sycamor-tree) desiring to see him? how sweetly was Christs heart affected towards this poor waiting Soul? He looks

looks up with a loving eye, to satisfy his longing looks; and how happy does this man think himself in so blessed a guest; he received him joyfully. Oh how ready will the quick-sighted Eagles be to gather about him, whose eyes are ever looking towards this rising Sun? *Behold I come quickly,* saith he; *Amen:* Say they, *Even so, come Lord Jesus.* Observe, how sweetly that lovely word (*Amen*) is couched betwixt them, and their hearts together in it!

Mat. 24.
28.

Rev. 22.

20.

Use of Examination.

Let us give our Souls a visit in the Name of the Lord, and commune secretly and seriously with our own hearts about our Spiritual Watch.

Discoveries of Spiritual Slumber.

1. Is the Lord silent to thee, who hath often used to speak much to thy heart, and to bespeak it? Dost thou hear seldom from him? will he scarce give

give thee a word? why then thou mayest be jealous of thy self, that thy heart is asleep; for he will have a mouth to speak, where there is an ear to hear. Canst thou not remember the months of old, when he gave in many words in season? has he not oft spoke to thy heart, when man spoke to thy ear? And does he now keep silence? Dost thou only hear the voice of a man now and so runnest to *Eli* (as *Samuel* did?) Dost thou hear much without, and little or nothing within? Does not thine ear affect thine heart? Is not the Word as a fire within thee? Dost thou hang upon the bare outward administration and art thou a stranger to the glorious ministration of the Spirit? Why sure thy watch is down, and he seems to slumber. And now he hides his ear from thy breathing: thou criest, and he will not answer thee. Ask thy soul solemnly, What's the matter? is his ear heavy? Is there not a cause within? Is not thy heart heavy? Has not he called, and thou hast not heard? Has not he knocked, and thou not opened? Is it not thus, O slumbring Soul?

Soul? Speak out, and tell the Lord how it is within.

2. Art not thou silent before the Lord, who usedst to cry mightily after him? Is not thine heart shut up now, which thou wast wont to pour forth? thy sighings come not before the Lord, as they have done, and thy groanings are hid from him. Art not thou a stranger to thy own closet, where thou hast much sought him in secret? Surely thy heart is fallen into a deep sleep; 'tis a sad swooning-time with thy sluggish spirit: how hast thou lost thy heart in point of love to prayer, and life in it? Oh wast thou thoroughly awakened, thou wouldst not for a world give over this thriving Trade of spiritual begging: thou couldst not keep so long out of his presence, who hath given thee so many sweet visits in prayer: the hypocrite will not pray alwaies: and 'tis no wonder, for he cannot pray at all in Gods account: But that a true *Israelite*, who has had power with God in prayer, should cease to pour out a prayer before him; this is strange, and yet not more strange

Job 27.12

strange than true amongst slumbring Christians, who cannot chuse but give over praying, when they give over watching: The Spirit of prayer must needs be silent under a spirit of slumber.

3. Is not thy Spiritual Warfare maintained? dost not thou wraastle against spiritual wickedness, &c? Dost thou not feel the Law of the mind warring against the Law in thy members? Art thou not at odds with thy own heart every day, and quarrelling with it for heart-fires? Why then the heart is asleep, whilest thy lusts lie sleeping within thee; thou dost not watch, whilest thou dost not war. How shamefully wilt thou be foiled by the lusts thou fightest not against? Sin will get head and heart too, whilest thy heart is asleep: thy lusts like so many flies will swarm about thy sleepy soul. Thou dost not reckon with thy self about thy dying to sin, self, &c. Alas, how dead is thy heart in the meantime? thou hast given over thy complaining of the body of death, and yet thy lusts are more lively; and thou live-

liveless : they strong, and thou art weak : sure they are awake, and thou sleepest.

4. Art not thou sensible of the subtle insinuations, and secret suggestions of Satan in this busie day of his? Dost thou meet with none of his buffetings, now he layes so about him? Dost thou feel none of his fiery darts, now Hell is broke loose? Mayst thou not be very suspicious that a spirit of slumber is upon thee, and the evil-spirit rocks thee? Art not thou pleasing thy self with smooth things, lying quietly upon a pillow of carnal security, and Satan pleasing of thee too, and loth to disquiet thee? Art thou at ease in *Zion*, singing a *Requiem* to thy soul? why thou mayest sleep on for him, and take thy rest. 'Tis not for his purpose to awaken us out of false dreams : this cunning Fowler is most busie with awakened spirits that are struggling from him, that would be ever upon the wing Christward ; but he stirs little when men lie asleep at his feet, only watches over them : he makes least noise there, but does most

F hurt.

hurt. Oh the Mystery of Iniquity works most and worst, amongst idle souls, that work not, watch not.

5. Dost not thou sympathize with the suffering Servants of Jesus Christ? Is not thy heart affected with *the afflictions of Joseph*? Hast thou little or no fellow-feeling of thy Brethrens calamities? Canst not bleed in their wounds at thine own heart, whose blood has been spilt like water upon the ground, for the testimony of Jesus? Sure, then thy spirit within thee is benumbed under a spirit of security, and almost past feeling. Did not the sad cries of the distressed Protestants, in the Valleys of *Piedmont*, and in *Germany*, saying, Have pity upon us, O our Friends, have pity upon us, for the hand of the Lord hath touched us! Did not (I say) their dolefull complaints come to thine ears, and did not this go to thine heart? do not thy bowels sound within thee towards them who are sighing it out, Our bowels, our bowels! dost thou not make lamentation over them, crying, Alas, alas! Is it nothing to thee, there are
so

so many mourners in Zion at this day hanging their Harps upon the Willows? and dost thou put no tears i'th bottle for them?

And further, how stands thy heart affected towards such as are afflicted in spirit? Does not thy soul bleed within thee towards poor wounded souls, who are ready to bleed to death for want of the gracious presence of the Lord of life? Canst thou not mourn in secret, for such as walk mournfully without the Sun? Time was, when thine head was as water, and thy eyes as fountains of tears, that thou couldst not but weep with those that wept, and mourn (as the Doves of the valleys) with them that mourned: but now thy eyes are dry, thy bowels strait, and thy heart hard. Oh what strong stupidity is upon thee? if all the members should suffer, when but one suffers? how stupid and senseless is that one, that suffers not when so many suffer? I cannot but pity such slumbering Christians, who want yearning bowels of pity, when I consider, what sharp medicines must be applyed to their insensi-

ble stupified spirits, to cut them to the quick, and fetch up their spiritual senses, to sympathize with Christ in his members.

2 Pet. 2.
7, 8.

6. Is not thy soul vexed at the filthy conversation of the ungodly, as *Lots* righteous soul was? Dost thou not bear the backslidings of Gods own people, as a burden upon thine heart before the Lord? Dost thou not inwardly tremble at the dishonour put upon that Name which hath been proclaimed amongst us, in so loud languages, as glorious in holiness, &c? Are not the abominations of the Times the very abomination of thy soul? Canst thou not mourn in secret, for the open Pride, prophaneness, profuseness of so many thousands in our Israel at this day? Why then, (believe it) thy heart is asleep indeed, when the crying sins of this adulterous generation do not awaken it.

Oh how many, who have appeared *as Children of the day, have fellowship now with the unfruitful works of darkness*? who once seemed white as snow, and are now as black as a coal; who
some

some years since would not have touched the garment spotted with the flesh, have now put on the *Æthiopian* skin again, and the Leopards spots; having once escaped the pollutions of the flesh, and are again entangled therewith.

How are the honourable things of the Law, and Gospel too, become contemptible in the eyes of many, who seemed to prize them above thousands of Gold or Silver? How are the precious Pearls of Jesus Christ, which are worth more than a World, and of which the World is not worthy, trampled under foot, as if they were nothing worth! O what loathing of Manna, even amongst Israelites? what turning of Grace into Wantonness? Horrible things are done in our *Israel*, and that in the sight of the Sun, published in the *streets of Asbekelon*, so that the daughters of the *Uncircumcised triumph*. And shall not the daughters of *Zion* sigh and mourn for these Abominations, which are more than enow to break ones sleep, and heart too, which break the Lord's own heart: *Ezek. 6. 9.*

And if thou layest them not to heart,
thy heart's asleep.

Directions for Watchfulness.

Psal. 139.
1, 2, 3, 4. 1. Ever set before thee, the All-seeing Eye of *Jehovah*, which is ever upon thee; His Eyes, which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, daily looked upon by an eye of Faith, will be very awakening; Think much upon those heart-stirring meditations, of God's glorious Presence, which were so much upon *David's* heart; as, Gods encompassing thy path and thy bed, besetting thee behind and before, looking thee through in all places, at all times; watching over every thought of thy heart, every word of thy tongue &c. O say oft within thy self, in thy goings out, and comings in, *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* &c. The Keeper of *Israel*, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, looks upon thee in all thy slumbrings, with a broad eye; thou art never out of his sight, sleeping nor waking; he never looks off of thee. How soundly was *Jacob* roused out of sleep,

sleep, upon the apprehension of Gods *Gen. 18.16*
dreadful presence; He *awaked out of* 17.

sleep, and said, The Lord is in this place,
and I knew it not, &c. Had I been a-
ware of him, I had been awake. Seri-
ous thoughts of approaching glory,
will put one beside their sleep, and
startle one to purpose; *Fear ye not me*
(saith the Lord) and will you not trem-
ble at my presence? Why then, 'tis be-
cause you *have eyes and see not; ears*
and hear not; Holy tremblings will pre- *Jer. 5.21,*
vent heavy flumbrings. Oh that our ^{22.}

drowsie Spirits, were continually over-
awed with the deep meditations of the
omniscience and omnipresence of the
Father of spirits, how effectually would
they be awakned out of carnal and
formal security? The eyes of Gods glo-
ry looking full upon us, will keep open
the eyes of our heads, and hearts too;
visions of God will clear up our spiri-
tual sight, and quicken it. Well, his
eyes are alwayes upon ours and his
heart goes along with ours, what need
have we of watchful eyes and hearts.

2. Wait for the glorious ministra-
tion of the Spirit, under every outward

Rev. 2. 3.

administration; This charge is given to the seven Churches, by him which had the seven Spirits of God, walking in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks, when he would earnestly provoke them to watchfulness, threatening to come upon them as a thief, if they did not watch: *Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* This blessed Counsel is recommended seven times, in two Chapters, to add the greater weight to it, and to make deeper impression. O set that stone with seven eyes, before thine eyes, to awaken them and spirit them:

Zech. 3. 9.

All the workings of th' eternal Spirit on our spirits are awakening; when ever the Word comes with life, in the power of the Spirit, it wil raise us out of spiritual slumbers. Indeed a lower dispensation will not do it: Oh how dead we lie at prayer, hearing, reading, &c. till the Spirit of Life breath upon us;

2 Kings 4. 31.

we are little moved, when the Spirit moves not: All's but as *Elisha's* staffe upon the Child, there was neither voice nor hearing; but if the holy Spirit stretch himself upon us, his eyes upon

upon ours, (as it were) then our eyes will be opened ; How casie a thing is it, to lie sleeping and slumbering in and under any Form, where there is no Power ; how dead we lie by the letter and it by us, without the Spirit ? Oh how heartless and Spiritless are most professors at this day, as the very dry bones in the open valley, resting and rusting in in outward forms, not feeling inward power ; and there they may rest till they rot, and lie till they die, if the Spirit do not breath upon them, as upon those dry bones. How many of Christ's witnesses are spiritually dead, taking up in the letter without life ? and in this unsuitable, uncomfortable posture will they lie languishing under spiritual Lethargies and Consumptions, till the Spirit of life from God enter into them. That blessed resurrection of the spirits of the Saints, out of the grave of formality and security, which is more to be desired a thousand times than their raising up in power and glory i'th world, without a plentiful effusion, and powerful operation of

of the holy Spirit, may not be expected, cannot be effected; If the Spirit of judgement and burning fall upon their hearts, it will fire them out of formality, and startle them out of security; when he shall come down, with a sound from Heaven, as with a mighty rushing wind, upon the sluggish Spirits of the Slumbring Virgins, how will they be awakned to astonishment, as the Apostles were, when the *Holy Ghost rested as fire upon them, &c.*

3. Be diligent, frequent, and fervent in spiritual Exercises, if you would keep up your spiritual Watch. Constant, conscientious discharge of duty, will be a special remedy against customary formality, and carnal security; pure Religion is no idle Trade; 'twill find us work enough, (can we but find in our hearts to fall to it; and that full of variety and excellency, to keep us awake and at work all our dayes. 'Tis not for want of work that any stand idle in the Lords Vineyard, but for want of will to it. 'Tis a very busie time with Jesus Christ, his heart is upon his work; and 'tis so with his
wait-

waiting-servants too, for his work is upon their hearts : and they that are lazie and sleepy-headed now, are like the Sluggard that sleeps in harvest, finding least to do, where there is most work : And they are slothful servants above all other, who are most sleepy, when they should do the most and best service. How busie will the Devil be with such drousie ones, and hardest at work with them, while they are at easie work, to cast them into a dead sleep ? His work goes on, where ours ceases : How much work have we found Satan in these dayes, by neglecting Gods work ? since we have left our first work, we have left our first Watch : and we find it now work more than enough to keep our souls awake. Omission of spirituall duties hath brought upon us an habitual indisposition to duties, that we find no heart to them, feel little heart or heat in them. Since Christians have ungirt their loyns, and ceased from spiritual motions and actions, their vessels are empty, their lamps going out, and themselves laid down to sleep. How
dull

dull and heavy are their spiritual senses grown for want of holy exercises? how listless and liveless are their spirits?

Oh then, 'tis high time, that all the faithful servants of Jesus Christ, should fall afresh upon their Masters work with double diligence; to redeem that time which stole away while they slept, and can never be recalled. And indeed Christians, of all the men i'th world, should not lose time, who have the best and most employment. Oh then, out of hand, take up that old thriving trade of the practice of Piety in all Gospel-duties, from a pure principle; as ever you would be found watching, at the coming of your Lord.

4. *Converse much with lively Saints, who are much upon their Spiritual Watch; their company will be very awakening, who are well awakened. They will be knocking at the door of thy heart, feeling thy spiritual pulse, and asking thee, if all be well within; they cannot but be jogging at thy elbow, if thou keep thy hands in thy bosom, and lie slumbring with folded arms. As iron sharpeneth iron,*
so

to doth the face of a man his friend.
Watchful servants will be calling off
the slumbering ones from beds of secu-
rity; they will be whetting up the
dull and lazy spirits of others, who
have a good edge upon their own. A-
mongst sluggish Christians, 'tis a thou-
sand to one, you'l grow sleepy too for
company; Sluggards will infect one
another with the sleepy Evil; they'l
lay a Cushion for you to sit down by
them, and take your fill of this false
rest: There's no spiritual noise amongst
them, nor heavenly news; no heart-
awakening words, All's either sinful
silence, or smooth words, hushing one
another asleep with their soft language.
Liveless Christians are like dying coals
which deaden one another, till there
be never a coal to warm at. Oh then,
if thou wouldst have a watchfull spi-
rit in this slumbring age, look after
communion in spirit with the most
quick, and lively-spirited Saints; hea-
venly sparks, that are ever flying up-
ward, as to their proper Region; they
will be warm, awakening, enlivening
company, (being well heated by the
fire

fire of the Spirit) for luke-warm, drowfie, liveless Christians.

5. Be ever setting on work awakening Graces, by the assistance of the Spirit of Grace. Stir up the Graces of
 2 Tim. 1. Christ that are most stirring; and they'll
 6. stir up thee, quicken thee, and set thee on fire, as sparks blown up, &c.

As, 1. *Lively Faith*. This is the new Creatures eye, quicker than the Eagles, excellent at watching. 'Tis the spiritual mans Seer, and the overseer of his watchings and workings; If this active grace be at work, it will keep the heart awake : The Watch cannot fall down, whilst Faith is up. It's a very busie grace, w^{ch} will keep us from sleeping, if it sleep not. Faith will be daily improving awakening Providences, quickening Ordinances, melting Mercies, searching Tryals; It will be ever taking in awakening considerations of the Majesty of the Creator, the Mutability of the Creature, of Mortality, Eternity, &c. It will be presenting awakening manifestations of the unconceivable love of God, the incomparable loveliness of Christ, the ad-

admirable beauty of Holiness, the unspeakable blessedness of Heaven ; It will be looking out at the eye, to see the King in his beauty, listening at the ear, to hear that voice, which his companions hear, waiting at heart to welcome his Spirit there : Faith is all life, full of Spirit, a quick Spring, which will set all on motion ; 'Twill set the whole man on work, and actuate every habit of grace ; Its operations are full of efficacy and variety ; upward, inward, outward, it has a large sphere of activity ; Oh could we live the life of Faith at a higher rate, how lively should we be, how watchful ?

2. *Warm Love* ; It's all heart and heat, there's a flame in it, which will enliven and awaken the most drowsie and heavy heart ; There's much life in love, much action in this affection ; it's activity will keep thee from security : Love is good at wathching, it will sit up long for the Beloved ; it cannot rest till he rest in his love upon it ; It would not sleep (with its good will) till it may lie in his bosom, and there it may rest safely and sweetly, when
he

*Zeph. 3.
Psal. 127.*

he gives his Beloved sleep. Love will wait and watch long, endure much; hard duty is easie to it, as *Jacob's* service for *Rachel*: Love lyes with eyes and heart open too, as loth to shut out Christ at either. It will wait long and longingly, for a look of his eye, a kisse from his mouth, the breathings of his love. An heart toucht with Christs love, cannot rest (as the needle toucht with the Load-stone) but when and where it should. Love has a single eye, and will watch well; 'tis clear, and quick as the Doves; it will

Cant. 4. 9. spy out its Beloved, and pierce his heart.

Oh could we but love much, we should watch much; and wait to meet our Beloved at every turn, in his

Cant. 7. 12 Garden, in his Banqueting-house, in his Vineyard, to give up our loves to him; Earnest love will be early & late at work, and watch for Jesus Christ.

3. *Holy Fear*. It will keep strict watch and strong guard, for fear of surprisal: It is a wary and watchful grace, and cannot endure to be taken at unawares. It's ever attended with

a godly jealousie, which will marvel-
lously prevent carnal security. In-
deed, they that have not this fear of
God before their eyes, and upon their
hearts, they'l cloze their eyes, stop
their ears, harden their hearts, and
grow careless and secure, as the men
of *Laiſh*, even till fearfulness and trem-
bling come upon them; and they (of
all others) are in greatest danger of the
fear and the snare, who fear least; the
deepest fearless security, will bring on
the heaviest fearful calamity. Oh then
let all the servants of the Lord watch
over their own hearts, lest they forsake
the fear of the Almighty, and he leave
them to a common, careless, fearless spi-
rit, and they be insensibly overtaken
with spiritual security: Oh *Sanctifie* Isa. 8. 12,
the Lord of hosts himself, let him be your 13.
fear, let him be your dread, that you may
neither fear their fear nor be afraid.
And indeed, the more fully thine heart
is possessed with a filial, reverential
fear of that glorious and fearful Name,
The Lord thy God, the less wilt thou be Deut. 28,
disquieted with false heart-tormenting 58.
Fears and Cares; *Blessed is he that*
G *feareth*

feareth alwayes ; he will be alwayes upon his Watch, to the preventing of much sin and sorrow, slumbring and wandring, sensuality and security.

4. *Heavenly Joy* ; 'Tis very enlivening and heart--awakening ; Like
 Cant.7. 9. *that of the best wine, which goes down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.* Where the spirit can rejoyce comfortably in the Lord, there his work will go on merrily ; his Watch will be kept chearfully ; such a soul can sing in the wayes of the Lord, and upon his watch even at midnight (as *Paul and Silas*) ; Whereas
 Act.16.25. an heavy heart drives heavily in all its watchings and workings. It's soon out of heart, and cries, *What a weariness ?* and, *Why should I wait on the Lord any longer ?* Every Command is grievous, to one that is grieved in spirit ; and every word and work (though easie) seems a burden to one that is a burden to himself : Now Spiritual Joy, is like *aqua celestis*, it will recover a languishing, swooning spirit. This refined wine, drunk out of the cup of salvation, is full of quickning spirits, and

and will make a Christian hearty, spiritfult and watchful: They that suck and are fatisfied with the breasts of consolation, as they are cast into a sweet and sound sleep in the arms of Christ, so they will cast off sinful, sluggish security.

6. Let watching and Prayer go hand in hand; and they will lend a helping hand to one another; they are lively, lovely companions joyned together by Christs own hand, and would be linked together as with a chain of gold in every Christians heart. Watching and prayer are mutually helpful and successeful.

*First, Watchfulness helps to lift up,
and keep up Prayer, as Aaron
and Hur held up the hands of
Moses, Exod. 17. 12.*

1. It helps us to opportunities of Prayer.
A slumbering spirit loses many seasons of Prayer, sleeps out sweet breathing-times of supplication. Where there is deep spiritual sleep, there's deep silence, a dumb spirit is there. The Sluggard

is folding his hands to rest, when he should be lifting up his heart with his hands unto God in the Heavens: If we watch not, Satan will make a prey of our praying times; the World will be stealing away our time and hearts too; Our praying times are precious times, our enemies envy them; and, of all times, will be interposing, when we are any thing disposed this way; they'll lose no time, to make us lose our best times; and if they can but take us off the duty of the day, they get the day. Now a watchful Spirit will keep time with God, (in whose hands all our time is) who ever says Nay; It thinks much to lose one meeting with him, he must not be put off, whatever is put by. Vigilancy helps much, as to constancy and frequency in prayer; an awakened heart will cry with *David*, morning, evening, and at noon; It will prevent the dawning of the Morning; and the Night watches: Such a Soul, only, can continue in prayer, and pray continually, that is continually upon its Watch.

Psal. 55.
17.

Psal. 119.
147, 148.

Besides, as watchfulness helps to find

for the slumbering Virgins.

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find out time for prayer; so, *to choose out the fittest*; when we are most at leisure for Heaven, in the best posture for prayer. As Jesus Christ was much at fasting and prayer (and best at it) so he watched seasons and secrecy for prayer; Hee's early at it, and solitary; And as he counsels us to pray daily, so *Mark i. 25* he cautions us to pray duly, solemnly, and secretly. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which seeth in secret, &c.* We should have nothing else to do, when we have to do with God in Prayer. 'Tis work enough alone; and he loves to have us much alone at this work; A man that is wise for his Soul, will watch a finding time, in all his seekings; and speak most to the Lord, when there's most hopes he will be spoke with, and he shall speed best. *Mat. 6. 6.*

Now a sleepy heart is for any time, or no time; 'Tis apt to put God off with the least and last; when it's Spirit's low, strength spent, affections earthly; when all out of frame, no help at it, no heart to it, no time for

Job. 32. 18.
19. 20.

it; He neither looks for Gods Spirit in prayer, nor at his own; And thus the Lord of all must be served with any thing, or nothing by a sloathful servant: whereas a vigilant soul watches Golden-Gospel-seasons, when it may offer up incense in Golden Censers. When the heart's full (as the Clouds) then to be pouring it out; when 'tis as a bottle of new Wine wanting vent; then to speak that it may be refreshed (as *Elibu* did) when the Spirit moves, when the heart is fixed, when the affections are warm, when most retired and inward. These are the heavenly breathing-times with the awakened Virgins, for this holy exercise. These are the living lively Saints holy-dayes for pure Spiritual recreation; these are their extraordinary times on earth, upon which they pray down more than ordinary blessings from Heaven.

2. *Watchfulness helps us to Importunity in prayer.* A watchful Soul is good at holding out with God, sits up with him and for him.

It will not keep silence, while God
is

is silent ; It can take no rest, and will give the Lord no rest, till he hear in Heaven and speak to its heart ; Take an awakened heart upon deep conviction, and how mightily will it cry unto the Lord, saying, Awake, awake, hear me speedily ; and, How long Lord ! 'Tis in great haste now, for an answer from Heaven ; and the more haste the better speed in this sense. Now it cannot but wait in waiting, pray with a prayer ; cry all the day : While its watch is up its soul is lifted up, that God would rejoyce the soul of his servant : Its hard at work within at this heart-duty.

*Psal. 40. 1.
Hebr.*

*Jam. 5. 14.
17. Gr.*

Pf. 86. 3, 4.

Now a slumbring spirit has soon done, shortest prayers are sweetest to it. It cares not for awakening the Lord, lest he should awaken it ; It would be let alone, and therefore 'twill let him alone ; It likes well to give the Lord rest and itself too : A sleepy heart cannot lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. 'Tis the awakened soul which stretcheth forth the hand towards God, whose eyes fail with looking up ; that wrestles with him,

*Heb. 12.
12.*

Luke 18.
1, 7, 8, 28.

as for life, (*Jacob-like*) and will not let him go without a blessing. Now importunity doth much vvith God in prayer; *Will not God avenge his Elect, that cry unto him day and night? I tell you,* sayes Christ, (vvho knevy his Fathers heart, coming from his bosome) *he will Speedily*; assoon as may be: Fervent prayer, though long at it, loses no time; life and length in this duty vvill carry it at last: It vvill not be put off, not avvay till it has got an alms: it has got the skill on't, and vvill not leave knocking, till the doore be opened; It vvill have its vvill of God (as one may say) because it vvould have nothing but vvhat God vvill. What a great vvord vvvas that from Christ to great faith and fervency in prayer: *Be it unto thee, as thou wilt*: She could vvish no more, and she must have no less.

Mat. 15.
28. Gr.

3. *Watchfulness helps to idoneity in prayer.* Awakened hearts are readiest to cry to the Lord, and to hear him speak: Its an instrument in tune to pray with; such an heart God himself has prepared for himself, and he will cause his

for the Slumbring Virgins.

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his ear to hear, and prepare of his goodness for it too ; A Christian upon his spiritual watch may say, *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* 'Tis an excellent frame of spirit for any spiritual duty, at any time. *Psal. 10. 17.*

A slumbering spirit is most unfit for holy strivings and struglings with God ; none more indisposed to this stirring duty, or less affected at it ; When the heart is asleep, prayer is but a dream ; tis phansie works then, not faith ; there's only a sound of words, no sound words ; All's *but as sounding brass, or as a tinkling Cymbal* ; it makes no musick in Gods ear : All's to seek in such a heart, faith, desires, hope, &c. it's ever at a losse : All's dead in a manner here, there's no breathing almost ; O what a distempered, distracted spirit is in prayer, where no watch is kept ! what averfions from it, what diversions in it ? How will the heart wander up and down, and give us the slip, if not watched ? What strange withdrawings and misgivings of spirit, when we draw nigh to give up our hearts to the Lord ? what a croud of confused thoughts

thoughts in a sleepy heart? weak and low graces are soon lost in it: 'Tis such a through-fare for Satans suggestions, that Christ has little or no room there: Now a watchful spirit will be sure to shut the door against all these, that Christ may have all to himself, the heart must be kept as a closet for him and the Soul to meet in.

4. In point of Receptivity; watchfulness puts a soul into a capacity to take in much from God by prayer; as to be much at it, and to do much in it, so to get much by it; God will be ever giving to that Soul, that gives itself unto prayer. A man that is all prayer (to allude to the expression in the original) whose heart is all upon it, as *Dauids*, must needs be a getting growing man, he drives so thriving a trade thoroughly; Now there's none better at it, then awakened hearts, and so none fitter to wait.

Psal. 109.
4. *Heb.*

1. *For supply and support in prayer;* Spiritual supplications cannot be carried on but by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which *Paul* reckoned so comfortably on; these sweet spices will
not

not flow without the breathings of the holy Ghost; It's well known to an awakened Soul, that we cannot think a good thought of our selves; 'Tis only Gods good Spirit, that can teach us to indite good matter; his quicknings make our Spirits as a living Spring, to bubble up and boyl over in fervent prayer; when he touches the lips with a living coale (as one of the Seraphims did the Prophet *Isaiah*) then our *tongues will be like the pens of a ready writer*. An experienced Christian, when awake, feels at his heart; he cannot help up himself in prayer, and therefore he waits for the Spirit to help his infirmities; he knows not how to turn his hand or heart to the work, without an helping hand from Heaven at every turn; and therefore he waits and weeps for the Spirit to help him out, *with sighs and groans that cannot be uttered*: and though he have no strength of his own, yet he has power with God, having power from God.

2. *For success and satisfaction after Prayer.* He that watches unto prayer and in it, will wait for the return of prayer.

*Psal. 45. 1.
Hebr.*

Isa. 6. 6.

*Rom. 8:
26. Gr.*

A Warning-piece

prayer, day after day, as *Noah* did for the Dove, till it returned with an Olive leaf in its mouth: when he has *sown in tears*, he waits for the precious fruits of a spiritual harvest, till he *reap in joy*: he looks long and longingly after his prayers and tears, with an open eye and heart; hee's ever and anon hearkening what the Lord will say, after all his speaking to him, and pleading with him by a spirit of supplication; he must hear and feel at his heart, that God hears in heaven: when he has done praying, his faith is as busie with God at his promises, as the Bee at flowers, and will not have done, till prayer comes home laden with honey. Thus poor beggars, that have the skill of waiting in prayer, and after it, get a good living by it; 'tis a good stock, that brings in great store of new and old. Now a slothful spirit has no heart at all, to look after his prayers, that had no heart in them; they die in the birth, and are still-born: how can he expect God should hear those prayers, which he scarce hears himself? They make no noise in Heaven, and there

there can be no good newes of them on earth ; they'l find Gods ear heavy, who find their hearts so ; whereas a watchful heart may reckon much of the incomes of prayers, and shall have a good account of them one day.

Secondly, Prayer helps to keep up our Watch ; it cannot fall down, while Prayer is up with faith and fervency.

i. It helps up a Christians Watch, and keeps it up, as it brings in the Keeper of *Israel*, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, to help us to watch. The prayer of faith crys loud in his ears, and awakens him, to awaken us ; it followes him (as for life) to quicken up our spirits to this spiritual Watch ; It has power with God, and fetches power from him, to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees, in this holy duty. Prayer upon the wings of faith, will fetch down Eagles wings in a promise, to mount up with, in this high and heavenly exercise, of waiting on the Lord, and watching for him ; Watch-
ing

Isa. 40. 31.

ing is hard work, and long duty; and alas, we are soon tyred out in any thing of spiritual duty; especially if any thing of difficulty in it, we are ready at every turn to lie down to rest.

Now lively prayer stirres up the Lord to stirre us up; It will set him a work at our hearts; and his heart-workings are heart-awakenings; while we are knocking at the gates of Heaven, and jogging (as it were) of Christs elbow, by stirring and strong cryes; his Spirit will be knocking at the door of our hearts; and jogging our spirits, to keep them awake: Let a poor heart but cry in the Ears of the Lord, and it shall hear a voyce from heaven behind it, yea within it, saying, Arise my Love and come away, &c.

Psal. 121. 2. Prayer helps in watching, as it engages the Lord to watch over our watchings, without whom all our watchings would be in vain; he keeps a strict watch over his waiting servants day and night, for he neither slumbers nor sleeps. Alas, we cannot keep our souls alive, nor our heart awake; but prayer takes the Lord into the Watch-tower

tower with us, and he sets a guard upon our hearts, a watch before our lips, &c. Hee's a tower of salvation to his people, and keeps them as in a garri-son by his own power, while they are upon his Watch, and at his Work. *1 Pet. 1. 5.*

The Watch must needs be safely and sweetly kept, where Jesus Christ is Captain of the Guard; we should be certainly surprized even upon our spiritual Watch by those spiritual wickednesses in high places, who are too high and too many for us. Were we not set upon the Rock that is higher than we, that is higher than they, the Rock Christ: we should be taken as naked men, even at our arms, did not the *Captain of our Salvation* watch with us, and over us. Now Christs waiting-servants are ever calling him in by the *prayer of Faith*, to keep up their Watch for them, by watching over them; their effectual prayers lay strong hands upon him, to keep him with them, as the Keeper of their heads and hearts for ever. *1 Sam. 28. 2. Achish to David.*

3. Prayer helps a Christian to Watch, as it brings him in to commune with

with God, who is *glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders*. When a poor silly, sinful Wretch comes to present himself before the *Holy One, who is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity*. How will the serious thoughts of the transcendent Majesty, and resplendent purity of *Jehovah* awaken him? *will not his excellency make him afraid, and his dread fall upon him?* When *Abraham* drew near to commune with the Lord, what awakened posture does he appear in? *Behold* (sayes he) *I have taken upon me to speak to the Lord, who am but dust and ashes. Oh let not the Lord be angry, &c.* When a Child of God finds in his heart to plead with his Father in Heaven, he first pleads with himself in these or the like words; *Wherewithal shall I appear before the Lord, or how my self to the mighty God of Jacob?* Awake, O my soul, awake, and offer not the dead, the lame, and the sick, in sacrifice to the living God: Hee's a great King, and his Name is dreadful: And as a gracious spirit communes with its own heart, before it commune with him that tries

tryes the heart; so the Lord communes with it in & after prayer: now the voyce of the Lord is a glorious voyce, which shakes the Cedars; and will it not then shake a bruised reed, and make it tremble at his Word? A broken heart that can speak its mind freely and feelingly to the Lord, and hears him speaking home to his heart, must needs be effectually awakened; such heavenly intercourse maintained by a spirit of prayer, will keep up a Christians spirit in a watchful frame, till it go up to God that gave it.

4. Prayer helps exceedingly at this heart-watch, as it is marvellously heart-affecting: In fervent prayer, how does the softned heart melt in godly sorrow, (as snow before the Sun, or wax by the fire?) mourning over the Lord and after him? how does the thirsting soul pant and breathe, and break with longings after the living God, as a thirsty land? how are the affections carried up towards heaven, in a pure flame of Divine life and love, ascending as pillars of perfumed smoke? And will not such unconceivable

H

Soul.

Soul-stirrings and strugglings as these awaken the heart? Sure there is a mighty spirit of activity goes forth in this Saints-exercise, when performed in the power of the holy Spirit, which will prevent heart-benumbing security; when a man of God wrestles with the Almighty in his might as a Gyant refreshed with Wine; what heart-raising and rowling work must there needs be (think ye)? 'Tis too busie a time this, to sleep in, when an immortal soul is working, as for life, with the ever-living God, about the things of Eternity.

*A double ground in the Text,
why we should double our
duty in watching and
praying.*

First, Because we are exposed to temptation, if we do not Watch and Pray; For,

1. We provoke the Lord to tempt us, while we tempt him by neglect of these Gospel-Duties, of his own appointment; as,

1. To

1. To lead us into temptation, when we will not follow the leading and guidance of his Holy Spirit and Word: 'Tis that which Jesus Christ, in tenderness to our weak, wandering spirits, would have daily upon our hearts in prayer, to beseech our Father, not to lead us into temptation.

'Tis true, as the Spirit of Truth testifies, that *God cannot be tempted to evil, neither tempteth he any man.* He is infinitely holy and righteous, and cannot tempt any to sin and unrighteousness. He is the chief good, and cannot lead any into any evil temptation, or temptation to evil. And he is unchangeably and eternally holy, and cannot possibly be tempted to unholiness: the just Lord will, can do, nothing that is unjust, no iniquity.

Yet the Lord may be said in his own sense, to lead us into temptation, for himself hath said it. As,

1. *By way of Probation.* When he tryes us like gold ith fire, as he did *Job*. When he leads us into the Wilderness, to prove us, as he did *Israel* of old; when we fall into the hands of

God, as *David* and his Servants did. And though we are to *account it all joy* *Jam. 1.2.* when we fall into manifold temptations; for as the temptations and sufferings of *Christ* abound in us, so our consolations *2 Cor. 1.5.* also will abound by *Christ*; 'tis his peculiar method (with which his secret ones are well acquainted) to bring good out of evil, and sweet out of bitter; yet it is upon the account of his sympathy with us in sufferings, and sanctifying them to us, by keeping up the spiritual exercise of watching and prayer, while we are exercised therewith; otherwise, as afflictions are never joyous in themselves, so they will be ever grievous to those, who have grieved the holy Spirit, by laying aside their spiritual watchfulness and prayer. Those sufferings must needs be full of vexation and perplexity, which find us under presumption and security; For,

First, What bitterness will it be to the soul, when awakened in a day of adversity, that it slept and slumbered out its dayes of prosperity; that which was then a bed of ease to the flesh, will

will be now a bed of thorns to the spirit. There cannot chuse but be much heart-aking, under heart-awakening tryals, to all slumbring Virgins; and that is the pain of all pains, the sharpest sting in sufferings; sad thoughts of sinful slumberings will break ones sleep; false rests will fearfully disquiet us, when we find them out, or they us in the day of calamity. Affliction will be a root of bitterness bearing gall and worm-wood at such a time; Oh what a heavy burthen has the careless neglect of watching and praying been, to some slumbring Christians in our dayes, who have lived at ease in Zion, while she has been in pain traveling to be delivered? How have they *mourn-
ed like Doves, and chattered as a Crane,
or Swallow*, for want of that Spirit of grace and supplication, which they had so long restrained, and so much extinguished, under a spiritual Lethargie? How have their hearts been ready to dye within them, like *Nabals*, for want of life in, and love to, those holy duties, wherein sometimes they had been lively and full of affection?

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How will the hearts of all the slumbering Virgins smite them one day, when distress shall come upon them, as sorrow upon a woman in travel? will they not then weep out their sleepy eyes, and sigh out their sluggish spirits, crying, Ah we fools, that had a prize in our hands, and no hearts to use it? We have lost many a good day, trifling out choice breathing times, in the sight of the Sun; and now the night is come upon us, and we cannot work; Alas, alas, for those dayes of the Son Man; *Oh that it were with us as in the monthes of old, when the Candle of the Lord shined upon our heads, &c.* What slothful servants have we been, hiding our Masters Talent in a Napkin, when we should have *ministred one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God?* And now the rust of them witnesseth against us, as the worldings gold and silver. We have shut our ears and hearts against the Lord and his good Word; and now the Word of the Lord is against us. We have slighted the sweet counsel and comforts of the holy Spirit,

and

Job 29.
2, 3.

1 Pet. 4.
10.

and now we feel its sharp convictions: We would not hear the checks of Conscience, and now we must hear its chidings. Oh the sting and smart of self-condemning Conscience, when it is once awakened out of self-pleasing, and self-easing security, by the scourging rod of the Almighty.

Secondly, what averfeness and forwardness, will fill thy spirit in sad hours, who hast sinfully slept and slept out so many good ones? When thou feelest thy sufferings weighty, and thy shoulders weak; thy pressures great, and thy patience small, thy body languishing, thy soul fainting, thy faith failing; How will thy Spirit be distempered, and thy peace disturbed; thy heart will be ready to *fret against* Pro. 19. 3. *the Lord*; thou'lt be angry as *Jonah*, *even to the death*; to see death looking thee in the face, when thou least looked for it; and the evil day nearest, when thou puttest it farthest from thee; and now thy slumbrings and wanderings will be set in order before thee, and thou hast neither set thy house or heart in order before the Lord;

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and now the Judge standeth at the door, to call thee to an account, and thou hast not made up thy reckonings for many a day ; thy time mispent, thy stock spent ; thy experiences lost, thy evidence to seek ; O how discontented will thy disappointed heart be at such a day ? Thou hast long neglected the ruling of thy own spirit, and now 'twill be too unruly for thee, as a wild bull in a net ; how apt wilt thou be to kick against the pricks (*Ephraim-like*) as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. An heart not watcht over, will be much out of frame for doing well, much more for suffering. When the weight of affliction falls upon a lazy, lame spirit ; what haltings will be discovered, and uneven carriage under the rod ?

2. *By way of Permission.* As the Lord may be said to lead us into temptation by way of Probation, when he takes us into his own hand ; so by way of *concession*, when he takes off his own hand ; and suffers Satan to put forth his hand against us. 'Tis true, the evil one is alwayes limited by the Holy One,

One, that he cannot do his worst ; or
else he would play the Devil indeed :
he's under Divine restraint (and in a
Prison, as it were) when most at li-
berty ; this strong man armed is re-
served in chains by a stronger than
he ; Yet his heart is set upon the ser-
vants of God, (as 'twas upon *Job*) *Job. 1. 8.*
with as much ill will as it can hold, *Hebr.*
(though through mercy, he cannot
have his will on them) The roaring
Lyon gapes with open mouth to swal-
low them up. How earnestly did he
desire to fitt the Disciples of Christ ? *Luke 22.*
he was greedy of such a prey as this : *31. Gr.*
and if the Lord did not put a hook in
the nostrils of this Leviathan, what a
piercing Serpent would he be ? How *Isa. 27. 1.*
ready was the evil spirit to offer his
service, to be a lying spirit in the mouth *1 Kings*
of the Prophets ? He would fain be *22. 22.*
deceiving, that he might be destroy-
ing. Now if we neglect our spiritual
Watch, we grieve the Spirit, and tempt
him to leave us to the temptations of
the evil spirit, who will be ever grieve-
ing and vexing our spirits, and doing
us all the mischief he can, and 'tis
much

much he can do with Gods leave : if the Lord take away the hedge, this wild Boar will be in upon us, and root up all.

2. We tempt the Lord to tempt us, when we give over watching and praying, by leaving us in temptation, as by leading us into it; and that's a very Sad Case.

As, 1. By withdrawing himself and his holy Spirit from us, when we are under tryals : And this must needs be a dark time, when God covers us with a Cloud in his anger, and covers himself as with a Cloud too. What a terrible Eclipse will that be, when the light of his Countenance is withheld, in a day of darkness and gloominess ? This indeed is the burthen of all afflictions, and lyes heaviest upon honest hearts. This is plain to see in the several perplexed cases and distressed conditions of *Job, Heman, David, &c.* under variety of afflictions and temptations. The hiding of Gods face was the sorest trouble, the saddest tryal; this struck deepest into their hearts, and made their faces gather paleness :
how

Job 13. 21.

Psa 88 14.

Psa 13. 1.

Eccl 30. 7.

how were their spirits drunk up with the *terrors of the Almighty*? Now 'tis most righteous with the Lord, to leave us in a day of adversity, when we leave him in dayes of prosperity; to leave us at a loss in our straits, when we leave and lose him in liberty. He will withdraw from us, when evill drawes near, if we have withdrawn and wandred from him, when he drew near to do us good: He will turn his back upon them in times of calamity, who have given him the back and not the face in times of tranquillity.

2. By delivering us up to our selves and our own spirits. When Gods people would have none of Him, *He* Psa. 81. 11, 12. *gave them up to their own hearts lusts*; they would not own the Lord, and be his servants; and he leaves them to be slaves to their own lusts, lording it over them. Ah, when a people grow weary of God, have done with him as to Watching in prayer, and let him alone, coming seldom at him; hee'l be a stranger to them, and leave them alone, as he did *Ephraim*: *Hee's joyned* Hof. 4. 17, 18. *to*

to Idols, let him alone, sayes God ; he will not joyn himself to the Lord, and the Lord will have nothing to do with him, but leave him to himself, and to his Idols ; and now all goes ill with poor *Ephraim* : his drink is fowr, or is gone, (as in the Hebr.) all is gone when God is gone ; and he commits whoredom continually ; all sours on his hands & in his heart too. Ah, when we slight the Lord, and slumber in his sight ; he will let us slip out of his hands, and then (as a Bowl falling out of the hand, down a steep hill) we follow the Byass of our own corrupt hearts, and run headlong without stop or stay Hellward. 'Tis not to say, How fearfully and shanefully the best of men will leave the Lord and lose themselves, when left to themselves ? We have remarkable proofs of this in those precious servants of the Lord of old, *David, Solomon, Peter, &c.* they made themselves vile ; yea even as beasts before him, when they were left to themselves ? And we have many lamentable instances in our dayes, of such, who looked like the sheep coming up from the
the

the washing, clean escaped from the pollutions of the world, yet have turned like the dog to the vomit, and as the sow that was washed to the wallowing in the mire; Would it ever have entred into their hearts that they should ever have so fowly defiled their garments, which seemed to have been washed so fair in the blood of the Lamb? would they not have said (with *Hazael*) are we as dogs, that we should do such things? Oh yes, when a people are delivered up to themselves, they will be readie to say with those, (of whom the Lord complaines) *We are delivered up to do all these abominations?* If we leave the Lord and his watch and work, we tempt him to leave us in temptation to our own hearts; and then that plague will be upon them, (which fell upon the heart of *Pharoah*) which was worse to him then all the plagues of *Egypt*; and we shall even harden our selves against the Lord.

2. We tempt the Devil, that tempter, to tempt us, when we give over watching and praying; He watches our slumbrings, and lies at catch for us, when

2 Pet. 2.

20, 21, 22.

2 King. 8.

13.

Jer. 7. 10.

Exod. 9.

14.

Job 24.
14.15.

1 Sam. 26.
12.

when he may take us napping; when we have a mind to fall asleep upon a bed of carnal securitie, the Devil will make our bed for us, and lie down softly by us too: when we give over Gods work, we are out of his way; and lie sleeping in Satans walks, and that as dry Tinder to his fierie Darts; And there come but a spark from Hell, and fall upon our hearts, it takes presently: when we put out the light and fall to sleep, we give him room and time for his works of darkness; he drives his wicked trade most and best i'th dark; *The eye of this Arch-thiefe waiteth for the twilight, when no eyes may see him;* he looks at us most with his envious eyes, when our eyes are shut, and the shadows of spiritual darkness are upon us; and how easily may he steal away our hearts, and the heavenly treasure out of them, at such a time as *David* did *Saul's* spear from his bolster, when a deep sleep was upon him. And indeed this thief in the night (to allude stil to that place in *John*) would rob us of all our Jewels, when a dead sleep is upon us, did not our faithful keeper watch

watch him, and watch over us: Oh what danger are we in every hour, to become a prey to this roaring Lion, while we lie sleeping at his feet? the fowles of the ayre have the greatest advantage against us that may be, whilst we lie as silly doves, heartles and spiritles before them. And is not this a very foule business, to set the Devil on work to do us mischief, vvhovvill hurt us and hinder us all he can, and that by neglecting our Masters business, vvhohas done us good and no evil, all our dayes.

3. We tempt our own lusts to tempt us, vvhenvve lay aside our spiritual watch; vve entice them to entice and allure us; And indeed here lies the great temptation within our own hearts *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed; and sin when it is conceived bringeth forth death:* The privy sore in the heart, the deadly wound; the womb that conceives lust, sin, death. Here the Devil layes his train of powder, and vvere there no fire of lust there, he could never blow us up; temptations vvitout could

Jam. I.

14, 15.

Job 24.
14, 15.

could take no hold, if there vvere no corruption vvithin; Satan set upon Iesus Christ vvith varietie of temptations, but could find nothing in him, and so could do nothing against him: The Prince of this vvorld, vvvas ever vvarring against the Prince of peace, but had no power against him, because he had no party vvithin him. Nay the subtle Serpent vvith all his power and policy could not prevail at all, no not once, against the vveakest, simplest Saint, if sin did not take his part. Tis the party vvithin betraies us; Tis the vvorst enemy, that vvithin; it opens the door to our enemies vvithout, yea to the vvorst of them, or they could not get vvithin us. Now vvhen vve are fallen into a dead sleep, and have lost the life of prayer; our lusts vvill swarm about us, as flies about a dead carcase: Sins not vvatched over, vvill get head and heart whilst vve indulge our selves saying, Soul take thine ease; vve pamper our sins and make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Spiritual vvatching and prayer vvill starve our lusts, eat out their very hearts, but
carnal

carnal slumbrings and sleepings feed them.

While prayer is kept up in power, sin is kept down and over-powvered; if our sins do not stop our mouths, nor straiten our hearts in prayer, our prayers will cry them down, and stob them at heart, when our hearts are lift up powerfully in prayer; our heart-sins, as pride, passion, unbelief, &c. will come down wonderfully (as the *Amalakites* fell, while *Moses* lift up his hands) O while we continue wrestling with God by fervent prayer, we may wrestle with *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, and that to victory; our souls shall *tread down strength* (to *Judg. 5.* use *Deborahs* expression in her tryumphant Song), while they are lift up, and poured out in prayer, for the help that is laid upon that One that is mighty. Whereas, if our hands be let down, and our hearts fall, our corruptions will get up and carry it against us with a strong hand: if we be not watchful and prayerful, sin will grow exceeding sinful: *If we restrain Prayer before* *Job 15.*

before God, our mouths will utter iniquity; (as *Eliphaz* said to *Job*) who seems to plead thus with him; How comest thou to be so distempered in spirit, so vain and distracted in speech, if prayer were not restrained? Fervent, constant Prayer would bring the heart into a good tune and temper, and keep it so.

4. When we neglect our Spiritual Watch, we lie naked to temptations without, as to corruptions within; the creatures are full of snares, and we shall be caught in them at every turn, if a spirit of slumber be upon us. The love of the World is con-natural to us, bred in the bone, most suitable to flesh and blood; our hearts hang downward, and move towards earth and earthly things, as a stone to the Center; and 'tis impossible to keep them up without Watching and Prayer. Indeed, while we keep close to God by Faith in Prayer, we keep him close to us; and then the World may not interpose, must not be closed with upon any terms; *For greater is he*
1 Joh. 4.4. *that*

that is in us, then be that is in the world. And while we Watch and Pray, our spiritual weapons will be mighty through God, to bring down all the strong holds of the god of this world.

Luther was one of the most watchful spirit in prayer, (we read of) and he speaks of one of the highest experiences that we shall meet with; That he was never tempted to Covetousness; there was no fishing for his spirit with golden baits, which was carried so high above the world in Faith and Prayer.

But alas, Christians now a dayes find the world a very great temptation, a world of temptations in it. How is the Moon got up to the heart; in this our age, that used to be under foot, *Rev. 12. 2.* to such as are cloathed with the Sun? Oh what hoarding up treasure on earth, by such as seemed to be heirs of Heaven, as if their Heaven were upon earth, and their hearts too.

How unbecoming is this to those that are born from above, to live be-

neath themselves : that ever so noble spirits of the blood-Royal, should be so embased ; and precious Sons and Daughters of *Zion*, who were comparable to fine Gold, should (in this sense) become as earthen pitchers ? How contrary is this to those heavenly principles of faith and love, which should carry us as upon Eagles wings above the world towards heaven ? Oh where is the love of the Father, where there is so much love of the World ? Have you ever tasted of the powers of the World to come, who are thus brought under the power of the creature ? What, shall the Children of the Kingdome look no further, live no higher than the Kingdoms of this World ? What, called out of the World, and at the Worlds call too ! These things could never be, if watching and prayer had been kept up all this while with life and power ; 'Twere not possible the World should steal upon the hearts of God's People thus, and steal them away too, were they not asleep : Now when Prayer's
down

down, and the World up, what a downfall will there be? *They fall into temptation and a snare, and into many hurtful and foolish lusts, which drown men in perdition.* Oh what a root of Evill springs up, where the World takes deep root! How do they *pierce themselves through with many sorrows*, and choak the precious seeds of Grace with these thorns! And when the heart is over-charged with the inordinate love of this present World; This Soul-benumbing Lethargy of carnal security will overspread it, that we shall not feel this sin within us, when it is even all over us; what sense can vve have of our living by Sense, while Faith lies dead? The love of the World vwill grow insensibly upon us, if it can but lull us asleep in its arms.

1 Tim. 6!
9, 10.

Secondly, Because we shall be indisposed to make any opposition, in an hour of temptation, if we do not Watch and Pray; our temptations will grow stronger, and we weaker

in Spirit every day then other; they will by as Gyants, and we as Grashoppers, (to use the expression of the Spies). And alas, as we are, so is our strength (as *Gideon* said of *Jether*) at the best but weakness; and our spiritual enemies will gather up their strength to take the advantage of us, when and where we are weakest; How easily may they make a prey of us, coming upon us when we are sore, as *Simeon* and *Levi* did upon the *Males*? especially if vve consider,

Gen. 34.
25.

Num. 14.
9.

Judg. 16.
19, 20.

1. That the Strength of *Israel* has secretly vvithdrawn Himself from his People, vvhile their hearts have been asleep, and now their Defence is departed from them, and they are as bread to the devouring mouth of the hungry Lion, who never had a better stomach to them. *Sampson*, who was so strong in the strength of God, vvas as vweak as another man when the Lord departed from him; the *Philistines* may now bind him as they please, put out his eyes, and make him grind in the Prison-house! Ah, since the

the Lord has turned his back upon a backsliding generation; how are the strong become as Tow, and they that had the excellency of dignity and strength, are as unstable as the water? how miserable are they swallowed up of temptations on every side? how easily led captive by their corruptions at every turn? And though they shake themselves sometimes (as *Sampson* did) and think to resist them as at other times; alas, they cannot do it, for their strength is departed from them.

2. That the Lord hath left them to themselves, who have laid him aside and left off watching and prayer; Now what can such naked men do in an hour of Temptation, when they meet with the strong man armed? must they not needs be spiritless, like *Saul* in the day of distress, when he was left to his own Spirit, and had no strength in him? What a pittiful forlorn creature is that man whom God has given over, and given up to himself; even like a lamb in a large place, *Hof. 4. 14.*

Nehem.
13.26.

1 King.
11. 8.

2 Chron.
32.31.

as back-sliding *Israel* ! what more destitute, and distressed, where no Shepherd, no flock ? how will it wander and lose it self ? The best of men in such a case are exposed to the worst of evils ; when *David*, a man after Gods own heart, was trusted but a while with his own heart, how shamefully it deceived him and defiled him ? who would ever have thought that Murders and Adulteries should have proceeded out of such a heart as his ? When *Solomon*, who was so beloved of his God, was given up to himself, how strangely was his heart changed within him, and turned from the Lord God of *Israel*, who had appeared to him twice, even to strange gods, and strange wives ! The wisest of men, when left to his own wisdom, appears as one of the fools in *Israel*, and whither does his shame go ? And good *Hezekiah*, when the Lord left him, to try him, to know all that was in his heart ; what pride of heart does he discover ; (though he had been so lately and so deeply humbled) ? And though

though the Lord had newly emptied all worldly glory before his eyes; Yet ^{2 King.} he could not keep his eyes and heart ^{20. 13.} off of the house of his precious things, &c. but glories in shewing all the treasures that were found there; when he should have glorified God, and shewed forth his wonders, in bringing the Sun of his life back, and the shadow ^{Ira. 38]} upon the Dial of *Ahaz*, &c.

Yea, blessed *Peter*, an holy Appostle of Jesus Christ, when he trusted to his own strength, and boldly professed above the rate of the rest of the Disciples, saying, *Though all men shall be* ^{Matt. 26:} *offtnded because of thee, yet will I never* ^{33, 35.} *be offended; and though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* When Christ trusts him with himself and his own strength, (but for a little season) how fowly he shews his weakness, and shames himself; and very sinfully offends him more then they all, by being so shamefully offended because of him; denying before them all, that he knew his Master, upon the word of a damsel that said, *Thou wast with*
Jesus.

Mat. 26.
71.

Jesus. And the Holy Ghost sets a brand of Cowardize upon this self-confiding Champion; leaving this upon record to all Ages (to shake and shame all the Lords people out of themselves), that when another Maid said, *This fellow was with Jesus, he denied with an oath, I know not the man.* Would any of the Disciples have ever believed such a thing as this of *Peter*? or he, of himself? that a cursed oath should have ever been found within his blessed lips, and that to deny his Lord and Master, whose lips had so oft blessed him; that he should so desperately disown him with his mouth, whom he owned, honoured, and loved so dearly at his heart.

Oh how have the mighty fallen, how have the mighty fallen, when they have been left to themselves, and have fallen into their own hands! Such remarkable examples as these taken into our serious consideration, may happily (if the Lord strike in with them) awaken some sleepy hearts from a presumptuous self-ful security, to a religious

ous watchful jealousie ; that they who think they stand, may take heed lest they fall ; as certainly they shall, (though they seem to be as pillars, as *Peter* did) if they stand upon their own legs, and not upon his, that are as *Pillars of Marble set upon sockets of fine Gold.* Cant. 93
15.

Upon this double Account,
that they are so exposed to
Temptation, and so indis-
posed to opposition, who
do not watch and pray :
Let me call for double dili-
gence in the Name of the
Lord to this double Duty.

*First, double your Watch ;
Oh watch, watch,*

1. Over your own Hearts ; for they Jer. 17. 9
are most deceitful, and the Deceiver
lies most at catch there : the subtil
Serpent he knowes where our guile
lies,

Gen. 3. 15.

lies, which he would willingly make use of, to beguile us with. 'Tis his Commission, only to bruise the heel; but 'tis his covetous ambition to break into the heart. How he watches day and night, works without weariness, and winds about every way, to surprize this Royal Fort of the King of Glory; if he carry that, he commands all, and will lead us captive at his will; if he can but get his head into our hearts, and keep his hand upon this great wheel, he has his hearts desire, & will turn all about with it. Oh therefore lay to heart that blessed Counsel of

Prov. 4. 23

our great heart-keeper; *Keep thy heart above all keeping,* (so the Hebrew has it) *for out of it are the issues of life.* 'Tis matter of life and death, this; 'Tis as much as thy life is worth, to watch the heart well; and not to watch it, is death. The Devil knows, if there be any good treasure within thee, it is laid up in thine heart; and he would fain have the key of this Cabinet, to rob thee of thy Jewels: If he can but corrupt this fountain, all the
the

the streams will be filthy; out of it will proceed the worst of Evils, when it becomes the worst part, which should be the best.

The Father of spirits doubles his Charge upon our spirits; The Lord God of Israel saith, Take heed to your spirit, take heed to your spirit. Here *Mal. 2: 15, 16* the unclean spirits muster up their Forces, and therefore here must our main Guard be; Watch but the heart so, as to keep him out there, and the Devil out of your heart, hee'l despair of you.

2. Watch the good Spirit of God, in all its motions, impressions, convictions, allurings, comfortings, &c. as ever you would escape the temptations and delusions of the evil spirit: and therefore,

First, Watch the good Spirit, to welcome him; make much of his sweet breathings, there's much life and love in them. If the Spirit come to convince you, saying, (as *Nathan* did to *David*) *Thou art the man*; say, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*. Be ready to hear
of

of that ear, though he speak such things as make it tingle, as you love the peace of your own spirits. If he come as a Spirit of glory and power to subdue your iniquities, to cut off your right hand, &c. with his two-edged sword; Oh say, Let him go on and prosper, till he have slain his thousands, &c. and made all his enemies become his footstool. If he come to rest as a Dove upon you, to meeken and sweeten your Spirits; Oh put forth your hands to take him (as *Noah* did the Dove with the Olive-leaf); make both much of, and set much by the good Spirit and Word of God, and the evil Spirit will not be able to do you much hurt. Oh prize the gracious manuductions of this faithful guide at an high rate, and be as glad of his heavenly conduct, as the wise men were to see the Star that pointed out Christ to them, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Lie as even as you can under his celestial influences, and sweet distillings of the precious dews of grace and peace; Attend his glorious ministration all along,

Matth 2.
10.

long; let him have his whole will upon you, and do his work wholly and fully within you; say him not Nay in any thing, and he will work mightily within you, and witness manifestly to you.

2. Watch the workings and witnessings of the Holy Spirit, so as you may not hinder him when he comes to help you, nor grieve him when he comes to comfort you; take heed of tempting him, who only can help you against the Tempter; O shut not out his glorious Light for all the glory of the World; imprison not any of his precious Truths for all the specious Liberties under the Sun; resist not the stirring power of his Grace upon you, when he's shaking the powers of darkness within you; refuse not the free and familiar tenders of his heart-renewing and reviving love, for thousands of Gold and Silver; Lose not willingly one syllable of the secret whisperings of this messenger of peace, lest he vvithdraw his light, love, power and peace, and leave you to the power of

of Satan, and he lead you into Prison, and keep you in darkness. Alas, alas, we have given the greatest occasion and advantage, to spiritual wickedness in high places, to tempt, vex, disturb, and divide us, by tempting, vexing, and quenching the holy Spirit, as ever any in the World have done ; And, are not now the shadows of the evening upon us, for slighting his goings forth as the morning ? How strangely have the lying Spirits deceived us, since the Spirit of Truth has been rejected, and the Truths of the Spirit ? What a thick, black, dark hour of temptation is come upon us since we have refused the clear Counsel and pure Comforts of the holy-Ghost, in the day of his gracious Visitation ; What strong delusions and strange declinings to the right-hand or the left, since we have forsaken the Guide of our spirits !

3. Watch your spiritual enemies :
Luk. 4.13. They watch us, as Satan did Christ. When the Tempter is gone, and his temptation seems to be quite over, he does but watch another season, and there-

for the *Slumbring Virgins.*

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therefore we must watch in season and out of season; as *Nehemiah* and the people of God with him, did with *Sanballat* and the enemies of God, they prayed and set a watch day and night; the enemy was very wroth, and they were very watchful; a sword in one hand, when at work with the other: So should we at this day, watch at the Lords work; watch and pray, watch and hear, watch and speak, &c.

Nehem. 4.
7, 8, 9.

'Tis very seasonable that counsel of the mighty Counsellour: *Take heed no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and deceive many.*

Mat. 24. 4,
5, 11, 24,
25.

Oh how much are we concern'd in that blessed caution, upon whom the ends of the world are come! How affectionate and importunate was *Paul*, the aged and experienced, in warning the people night and day, and that with tears, to beware of such as should seek to withdraw them from the Gospel of Christ! Do not spiritual dangers multiply upon us every day, whiles we are under a spirit of slumbering security; from our foul-en-

L

mies;

mies, and that on every side; Oh what need of the whole Armour of God, on the right hand and on the left; what need of a diligent spiritual watch, over our heads and hearts, words and ways, teachings and hearings! Oh gather up your spiritual forces everyday, & call in auxiliaries from Heaven, & follow the Captain of your Salvation, Watching and Praying (as the Armour-bearer did *Jonathan*, climbing upon hands and feet) contend earnestly for the faith which was once given to the Saints; and as you
 & *Pet. 1.5.* are fighting the good fight of faith, be ever looking up to Jesus, and you shall be kept as in a Garrison (so the word imports) by his power, through faith unto salvation.

4. Watch over, and for one another for good, in an evil time; 'tis very seasonable to be knocking at one anothers doors, and jogging at each others elbows in the spirit of meekness, to keep as many awake as you can, in this slumbring time, through the good hand of God upon you; and surely they

they, whose hearts are awakened in such a day as this, by the Lords speaking from heaven to them, cannot keep silence, but must be speaking to their brethren in the name of the Lord saying, *awake, awake.* As our hearts should dwell much upon awakening meditations, so our mouths should be filled with awakening salutations and exhortations, when we meet with the servants of Christ, as it was with the lively Christians in the primitive times) saying, *Behold he comes like a thief;* and, *The Judge standeth at the door;* and the like : When so many watch one anothers haltings ; let us watch to be helpers of one anothers faith and joy , by provoking one another to Watching and Prayer ; when many fellow-servants are smiting one another with words of violence and verulency, let us smite one another with words of truth and soberness : and the deeper they pierce the heart in the spirit of Love, the better : could we hit one another o'th heart-vein, 'twould be a mercy. Oh that the righteous

would thus smite one another, with gracious words of reproof, to restore one another, and all in much mutual soul-love, what a kindness would this be? Such precious oyntments would not break the head, but mollifie and meeken the heart. Such wounds would be welcome from the hand of a friend. Alas, we complain every where of the Saints flumbring, wandring, and wantonness; 'twere better we turned our complaints inward, and left them upon our selves, that we do not stir up one another to Watching and Prayer; we do but bear one another as burthens upon our spirits, when we should bear one anothers burthens, and help at a dead lift, as with one shoulder; we see poor Christians in a dead sleep on every hand, and we lie dying by them, but who calls upon them, to be watchful, and strengthen the things that are ready to die? How many have our eyes beheld lying as a man asleep upon the top of a Mast, and floods of temptations under them too, ready to swallow them up; but how few

Rev. 3. 2.

Pro. 23. 34

for the slumbring Virgins.

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2 Sam. 16,
17.

few have we laboured to awaken to this day? may we not reflect upon our selves in the words of *Absolom* to *Hushai*: Is this our kindness to our friends? Is this nothing to you, all ye that pass by, do you not take notice how many foolish Virgins, lye slumbring and languishing upon beds of sensuality and security, and the house ready to be set on fire over their heads; and do you take no care to awaken them? would it not pity your very heart, to see the flames seize upon them, while they are asleep? How long has the keeper of Israel watched over them, and kept them as the apple of his eye, notwithstanding all their slumbrings and wandrings; and does he not expect (think you) that you should be your brethrens keeper for his sake, and cry unto them in all haste to prepare to meet him, lest he withdraw the wing of his protection from them, and leave them naked; if you see your brethren sleeping, starving, dying, and shut up the bowels of your compassions from them in such

a case, how dwells the love of God in you? And if you say, 'tis not in mans power to awaken anothers heart, who cannot awaken his own; can a man raise the dead? 'Tis true, the low voyce of a weak man can never make those hearts hear, which can sleep under the loud thunderings of Heaven; why but can you weep over them, as the *Jews* did over *Lazarus* in his grave? can you feelingly sigh over them, saying, Can these drie bones live? Who shall roul away the stone, and open their graves? why he that is the Resurrection and the Life, can awaken them out of the deepest sleep, and quicken them with a word of his mouth; If Jesus will but groan in Spirit with you, and say, Awake, arise, come forth; the dead shall hear his voyce and live. You cannot lift up their sleepy hearts, no alas, they are too heavy for you; but cannot you lift up a prayer for them? If any man see his brother sin a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life; What high encouragement is here to pray-

1 *Job*. 5. 16.

praying-souls to lift up their voice on high, for such as are sinning and sleeping in sin almost to death; Oh then if the Spirit of prayer were raised again from the dead (as one may say) what blessed hopes would there be of a spiritual resurrection, to many poor hearts, that are even dead and buried in the grave of securitie.

Secondly, double your duty of Prayer; Pray, Pray,

1. For a plentiful and powerful effusion of the Holy Spirit to counsel and comfort our foolish, fainting spirit in this hour of temptation. 'Tis sad to behold, since we have caused the good Spirit to withdraw his gracious influences, how the glory is departed in a great measure from Churches, Ordinances, Communions, &c. in most places; may we not sadly sigh out that heart-breaking word *Icha-*
bod, and say, Where is the glory; how many choise Gardens of the Saints are withered, since the Lord

has withheld the spiritual dewes of Heaven! How thin and lean is *Jabob* become, and waxen pale, since a famine of the Spirit has been amongst us! How spiritless, faithless, heartless, fruitless, loveless are most Christians grown, since we have slumbred and sinn'd away the Spirit of faith, life, love, power, &c. How is the Gold become dim, the fine Gold changed, now he that has the seven Spirits is turned aside from the Golden Candlesticks? Oh it is high time then, to beg as for life, that the Spirit would come down as floods upon the dry ground, that the Churches may be as watred Gardens, and the Saints may grow up as Willows by the Water-Courses. Oh let all the awakened servants of Christ cry, as with one

Cant. 4. 16. heart and mouth, *Awake O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon the Gardens, that the Spices thereof may flow out; that our Beloved may come into his Garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.* Oh when, when shall a precious box of Oyntment be broken over

over us, to fill our hearts with its favour? Oh when will the Spirit come down amongst us as a Refiners fire, or Fullers sope, to purifie us as Gold and Silver, that we may offer up pure offerings of righteousness, which may be pleasant to the Lord, as in the dayes of old? Oh that we could wait in the Spirit (as old *Simeon* did for the consolation of *Israel*) for that power from on high, that so strengthens weak hearts and hands, that the feeble may be as *David*; For such an anointing with fresh Oyl, as may cause us to move swiftly and sweetly after Jesus Christ?

And we have many precious cords of love let down to pull at, for this gracious Gospel-promise; as the special promise of the Father of mercies, to send the Comforter, oft repeated for our better assurance; and he is faithful that hath promised; he will not deny his people long, nor alwayes, for he cannot deny himself. And the effectual prayer of our Lord Jesus, who never prayes amils, but is heard alwayes

alwayes of his Father; This was that sweetest Myrrhe which dropt from the lips of Christ, as he was ascending up to Heaven, his greatest last Testament-promise of a double portion of his Spirit: Now, is it so much upon the Lords heart to bestow this peculiar blessing, and should it not be much upon our heart to ask it; especially being that glorious ministration, which is to continue, for the support, supply and solace of the Saints, till the appearance of Jesus Christ, without which no outward administration can be effectual.

2. Oh Pray, Pray, that *Jehovah*
Psa. 2. 6, 8. *would set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, that the Heathen may be his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession: that the government may be upon his shoulder, who is*
Isa. 9. 6- *cloathed with a vesture dipt in blood,*
Rev. 19. 13 *& 16. 14* *and hath on his thigh a Name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; that all things may be opened and shut*
Isa. 2. 11, *by the Key of David. The Lord is*
17. *arising to shake terribly the Earth, the*
loftiness

loftiness of man must be bowed down,
and the haughtiness of men made low,
that the Lord alone may be exalted in
his day. Oh that the Sun of righte-
ousness were at this hight once, there
would be a glorious Sun-shine day
indeed. The God of Heaven and
Earth has promised, he will *once more* Heb. 12.
shake Heaven and Earth, to bring in 26, 27, 28.
that Kingdom that cannot be shaken,
and the things that shall remain; and
Heaven and Earth shall pass away, ra-
ther than one tittle of his good Pro-
mise shall fall to the ground. The
Father's heart is all upon his be-
loved Son, in whom his Soul deligh-
terh, to exalt Him highly, give Him Phil. 2.9:
a Name above every Name. And shall
not the hearts of his Children go in
with him, and work strongly that
way? It was for their sakes he hum-
bled himself so low, even to the death
of the Cross. Oh how should their
hearts break with longings, that he
may be extolled, and be very high,
crowned with Majesty and Glory?
Why then let all the Lords Remem- Jer. 33. 14
brancers

brancers make mention of this good thing promised, (of which he loves to be put in remembrance) before him night and day, that Jesus Christ may take to himself his great power and reign. Oh when shall the sounding of the seventh Angel be heard, as the great voices in Heaven, all the world
 Rev. 11. 15 over, saying; *The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* Oh that
 Cant. 3. 10 King Solomon would send his Chariot, that is paved with Love, for the Sons and Daughters of Zion, that they may enter with joy and gladness into the Kings Palace; how would their spirits revive within them? and they would say, It is enough.

3. Improve the Spirit of grace to the utmost; for the chaining up the unclean spirit. Oh try what power you have with the *Father of Lights*, to set his power on work to shake the powers of darkness. If fervent Prayer, lift up by the hand of faith, bind Gods hand, and put him to say, Let
 me

me alone ; will it not overcome him, to bind up Satan, and to bruise him under the feet of his Saints shortly. The Devil is come down with great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time. He followes his Kingdom with greatest violence towards its period ; hee's hot upon't, throwing with fury his fiery darts round about. The Adder's poyson is boyling up to the height. This enemy is comming upon us like a flood : Oh 'tis high time to set upon the gates of Heaven with an humble and holy violence, knocking day and night, till the holy Spirit come down with prayer, and lift up a Standard against him.

The old Serpent has now above five thousand years experience upon his back ; hee's now master indeed of his black Art. Oh what Multiformity and Variety in his methods ? what subtilty and secrecy in his snares ? how destructive and obstructive are his devices and depths ? Oh when will the Angel come down from Heaven with
that

Rev. 20.
1, 2, 3.

that great chain, and lay hold on the Dragon and bind him? Ah, what a world of mischief will he do, if he be let loose a while? For now this Prince of darkness transforms himself into an Angel of light, to bring in the greatest darkness; and the Devil in white, or the white Devill, is most dangerous and deceitful; now, like the adulterer mentioned, *Job 24. 15.* he disguiseth himself, or sets his face in secret, (so the Original) that he may beguile and defile us, and we never know it; and be most and best at his wicked work, when least in sight. He has put on a vizard of profession, and now playes the thief in grain, stealing away the the power and heart of pure Religion. He has oyl in his mouth, and truth in his tongue; but war and a lie in his heart. And how many are betrayed with his flattering kisses, killed with his false kindnesse, and by swallowing down his sugered, poysonous pills greedily? How many are taken with the fine hair of the locusts that ascend out of the bottomless pit, who sting them

Rev. 9.
8, 10.

them with their tailes as Scorpions. Oh then if ever you pittied poor silly souls, laden with sin, and led captive by Satan; now pittie and pray for them much more : Oh cry out (as the betrothed Damsel, fearing ravishment) to the Captain of your Salvation, to *lead Captivity Captive*, to rescue his darlings from the Lions, and to shorten this hour of temptation.

4. Oh Pray, Pray, for a glorious spiritual resurrection of the hearts and lives of the Saints, after so great a death has past upon them; that times of renewing and reviving may come from the presence of the Lord, to the decaying and desponding spirits of his people; Oh what a blessed, beautiful sight, would such an heavenly Spring be, after this heart-withering Winter-season? Would the flowers of the spouses Garden flourish once, the Pomegranats bud forth, & the tender Grape send forth a good smell : then would the singing of birds, and the voyce of the Turtle be heard in our land, and we might chearfully get up early to the

Cant. 2. 11, 12, and 7. 12, 13.

the Vineyards. Oh be earnest with the Father of Spirits to send down a special anointing from on high, for the new spiriting of his people for the work of their generation; a common spirit will not carry them through special service; no, it must be that other Spirit that *Caleb* had, or they'll never follow the Lord; fully; The Sons and Daughters of *Zion* must be awaked, to put on beautiful garments, and shake themselves from the dust, as they that are redeemed from the earth, and from men, as ever they would appear in a good Gospel-posture to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; They must be putting on that new Man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, and be renewed in the Spirit of their minds, or they'll have no heart, to think of the New Heaven and New Earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell. That work which the Lord is carrying on in the world, is high and heavenly, much above the world. A low-spirited and earthly-minded Generation can never reach

reach it, their poor flat spirits must needs shrink from it, or sink under it, at one time or other. Oh they had need of gracious, excellent spirits, changing from Glory to Glory, by the Spirit of Glory resting on them; who look to keep pace, or hold any considerable comfortable correspondency and compliance with those glorious Works which the Lord will bring forth in the latter dayes, who *is wonderfull in Counsell, and excellent in Working.*

Why then, 5. let us look upon it, as one main work of the day, to set Faith on work at the Promises by Prayer, for Judges as at the first, and Counsellors as at the beginning; Men of choice spirits, answerable to *Fe-* *Exod. 18. 21.*
thro's choice; able men, fearing God, men of Truth, hating Covetousness. And while I am stirring you up to make supplications to the Lord our Righteousness, that he would graciously vouchsafe a peculiar unction and qualification, to such as are in Authority; let me set before your
M eyes

*Job 29.
31, 12.*

eyes one of the first and fairest patterns, deserving to be set in letters of Gold, and engraven upon our hearts as with the point of a Diamond ; the purest primitive mould of Mercy and Justice, sweetly meeting together in the righteous breast of *Job*, and striving (as it were) for super-eminency and victory : As for *Righteousness*, he cloatheth himself with it ; and Judgment was to him as a Diadem ; He brake the jaws of the Oppressor, and pluckt the spoyl out of his teeth ; and delivered the Poor that cryed, and the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him. As for Mercy, his condescention and compassion is very remarkable ; when he sate Chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, he was as one that comforted the Mourners ; *A Father to the Poor and Fatherless ; eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ;* who caused the heart of the Widow to sing, and the blessing of such as were ready to perish came upon him. O that *Jesus Christ*, that blessed and onely *Potentate*, would make

make all our Governours and Magistrates willing in the day of his power; to kisse the Son in humble subjection and hearty affection to his righteous Scepter; and to lay down both Sword and Scepter at his feet (as the Elders did with their Crowns):

Oh that there were in them such an heart; as to say with the inhabitants of Judah, in their hearts; *The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be our strength, in the Lord of Hosts their God.* That they may be as *nursing Fathers to the Saints*, the Children of the most high, yea the least of Christs Brethren; accounting it their greatest glory and praise, to promote the glory of the King immortal and eternal, the only wise God; *to be a praise to those that do well, and a terror to evil doers*, putting sinners to shame. Oh that the *Rock of Israel* that spake it, would make it good; That they that rule over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God: *And they shall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds,*

² Sam. 23

^{3, 4.}

as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. Why let us open our hearts and mouthes wide (by the help of the Spirit) for such a blessing as this, as they waited for Job, even as for the latter rain.

Obad.
v. 21.

Zech. I.
22, 21.

Psa. 142.
6, 9.

Rev. 18.
14.

And spread those good old Promises before the Lord, which are as fresh upon his heart as ever, to renew them in these latter dayes ; *That Saviours shall come upon Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau, and the Kingdom shall be the Lords ; That he will raise up Carpenters to break the horns, that scatter Judah, so that no man can lift up his head ; That he will put that honour upon his Saints, To execute the judgment that is written, with a two-edged sword in their hands, and the high praises of God in their mouths. That the Faithful, Chosen, and True, cloathed in fine and white Linen, shall give Blood to drink to the Woman, who is drunken with the Blood of the Saints and the Martyrs of Jesus, and shall destroy that great City which reigneth over*

over the Kings of the Earth; and shall overcome all his and their enemies in the Blood of the Lamb; for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. Oh then let the Prayers of all the Saints meet upon the Golden Altar, *Rev. 8.* that the Sinoak of the Incense may *3, 4.* ascend up before God day and night; and let them cry with a loud voice, saying, *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, &c?*

Lastly; Pray, pray for the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, upon all pure Evangelical Administrations; That Jesus Christ would walk *Rev. 1.* in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks; *13, 16.* hold the Stars in his right-hand, that the Golden Pipes may empty the Golden Oyl out of themselves from the Olive-tree; and his Servants be anointed with the Oyl of Gladness, who *Zeck. 4.* desire to keep the Commandments of *11, 12.* God, and the Testimony of Jesus. *Jer. 3. 15.* And that he would send Pastours according to his own heart, that may feed the People with knowledge and understanding; able Ministers of the New-

— New-Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit ; and send them forth in the Power and Spirit of *Elijah*, to turn many to the Lord. And that the good Shepherd would call his own Sheep by name, lead them out, and go before them ; that they may know his voice, and follow him, and go in and out and find Pasture.

1 Thess.
1. 5.

Rev. 3.
8, 10.

That his little Flock receiving the Gospel not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance ; may have that glorious Character of the Church of *Philadelphia*, as a Crown of twelve Stars upon their heads ; that they have kept the Word of his Patience, and have not denyed his Name ; who will keep them in this hour of Temptation.

E I N I S